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The Writings of
Henry
Fielding



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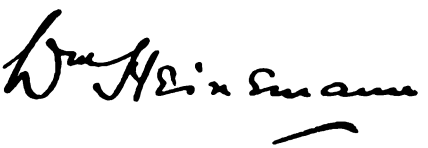
THE COMPLETE WORKS
OF
HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.

THE NOVELS IN SEVEN VOLUMES
THE PLAYS AND POEMS IN FIVE VOLUMES
THE LEGAL WRITINGS IN ONE VOLUME
THE MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS IN THREE VOLUMES
COMPLETE IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES

With an Essay on the Life, Genius and Achievement
of the Author, by
WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY, LL.D.

VOLUME NINE
PLAYS AND POEMS, II

This edition of the complete writings of Henry Fielding is limited to 375 numbered copies for Great Britain, of which 25 copies are printed on Dutch hand-made paper, with additional illustrations.



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From an original drawing by E. E. Carlson.

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THE TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES

OR, THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

TOM THUMB THE GREAT,

WITH THE ANNOTATIONS OF

H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS

FIRST ACTED IN 1730, AND ALTERED IN 1731.

H. SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS, HIS PREFACE

THE town hath seldom been more divided in its opinion than concerning the merit of the following scenes. Whilst some publicly affirmed that no author could produce so fine a piece but Mr. P——, others have with as much vehemence insisted that no one could write any thing so bad but Mr. F——.

Nor can we wonder at this dissension about its merit, when the learned world have not unanimously decided even the very nature of this tragedy. For though most of the universities in Europe have honoured it with the name of "Egregium et maximi pretii opus, tragœdiis tam antiquis quam novis longe anteponendum;" nay, Dr. B—— hath pronounced, "Citius Mævii Æneadem quam Scribleri istius tragœdiam hanc crediderim, cujus autorem Senecam ipsum tradidisse haud dubitarim:" and the great Professor Burman hath styled Tom Thumb "Heroum omnium tragicorum facile principem:" Nay, though it hath, among other languages, been translated into Dutch, and celebrated with great applause at Amsterdam (where burlesque never came) by the title of Mynheer Vander Thumb, the burgomasters receiving it with that reverent and silent attention which becometh an audience at a deep tragedy. Notwithstanding all this, there have not been wanting some who have represented these scenes in a ludicrous light; and Mr. D—— hath been heard to say, with some concern, that he wondered a tragical and Christian nation would permit a representation on its theatre so visibly designed to ridicule and extirpate every thing that is great and solemn among us.

This learned critic and his followers were led into so great an error by that surreptitious and piratical copy which stole last year into the world; with what injustice and prejudice to our Author will be acknowledged, I hope, by every one who shall happily peruse this genuine and original copy. Nor can I help remarking, to the great praise of our Author, that however imperfect the former was, even that faint resemblance of the true Tom Thumb contained sufficient beauties to give it a run of upwards of forty nights to the politest audiences. But, notwithstanding that applause which it received from all the best judges, it was as severely censured by some few bad ones, and, I believe, rather maliciously than ignorantly, reported to have been intended a burlesque on the loftiest parts of tragedy, and designed to banish what we generally call fine things from the stage.

Now, if I can set my country right in an affair of this importance, I shall lightly esteem any labour which it may cost. And this I the rather undertake, first, as it is indeed in some measure incumbent on me to vindicate myself from that surreptitious copy before mentioned, published by some ill-meaning people under my name; secondly, as knowing myself more capable of doing justice to our Author than any other man, as I have given myself more pains to arrive at a thorough understanding of this little piece, having for ten years together read nothing else; in which time, I think, I may modestly presume, with the help of my English dictionary, to comprehend all the meanings of every word in it.

But should any error of my pen awaken Clariss. Bentleium to enlighten the world with his annotations on our Author, I shall not think that the least reward or happiness arising to me from these my endeavours.

I shall waive at present what hath caused such feuds in the learned world, whether this piece was originally written by Shakespeare, though certainly that, were it true, must add

a considerable share to its merit; especially with such who are so generous as to buy and commend what they never read, from an implicit faith in the author only: a faith which our age abounds in as much as it can be called deficient in any other.

Let it suffice, that the TRAGEDY OF TRAGEDIES; or, THE LIFE AND DEATH OF TOM THUMB, was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Nor can the objection made by Mr. D——, that the tragedy must then have been antecedent to the history, have any weight, when we consider, that, though the HISTORY OF TOM THUMB, printed by and for Edward M——r, at the Looking-glass on London Bridge, be of a later date, still must we suppose this history to have been transcribed from some other, unless we suppose the writer thereof to be inspired: a gift very faintly contended for by the writers of our age. As to this history's not bearing the stamp of second, third, or fourth edition, I see but little in that objection; editions being very uncertain lights to judge of books by: and perhaps Mr. M——r may have joined twenty editions in one, as Mr. C——l hath ere now divided one into twenty.

Nor doth the other argument, drawn from the little care our Author hath taken to keep up the letter of this history, carry any greater force. Are there not instances of plays, wherein the history is so perverted, that we can know the heroes whom they celebrate by no other marks than their names: nay, do we not find the same character placed by different poets in such different lights, that we can discover not the least sameness, or even likeness, in the features? The Sophonisba of Mairet, and of Lee, is a tender, passionate, amorous mistress of Massinissa; Corneille and Mr. Thomson give her no other passion but the love of her country, and make her as cool in her affection to Massinissa as to Syphax. In the two latter, she resembles the character of Queen Elizabeth; in the two former she is the picture of Mary Queen of Scotland. In short, the one Sophonisba is as

different from the other, as the Brutus of Voltaire is from the Marius, jun., of Otway; or as the Minerva is from the Venus of the ancients.

Let us now proceed to a regular examination of the tragedy before us, in which I shall treat separately of the Fable, the Moral, the Characters, the Sentiments, and the Diction. And first of the

Fable; which I take to be the most simple imaginable; and, to use the words of an eminent author, "one, regular, and uniform, not charged with a multiplicity of incidents, and yet affording several revolutions of fortune; by which the passions may be excited, varied, and driven to their full tumult of emotion."——Nor is the action of this tragedy less great than uniform. The spring of all is the love of Tom Thumb for Huncamunca; which caused the quarrel between their majesties in the first act; the passion of Lord Grizzle in the second; the rebellion, fall of Lord Grizzle and Glumdalca, devouring of Tom Thumb by the Cow, and that bloody catastrophe, in the third.

Nor is the moral of this excellent tragedy less noble than the fable; it teaches these two instructive lessons, viz.: That human happiness is exceeding transient: and that death is the certain end of all men: the former whereof is inculcated by the fatal end of Tom Thumb: the latter, by that of all the other personages.

The Characters are, I think, sufficiently described in the Dramatis Personæ; and I believe we shall find few plays where greater care is taken to maintain them throughout, and to preserve in every speech that characteristical mark which distinguishes them from each other. "But, (says Mr. D——) how well doth the character of Tom Thumb, whom we must call the hero of this tragedy, if it hath any hero, agree with the precepts of Aristotle, who defineth 'Tragedy to be the imitation of a short, but perfect action, containing

a just greatness in itself,' &c. What greatness can be in a fellow, whom history relateth to have been no higher than a span?" This gentleman seemeth to think, with Serjeant Kite, that the greatness of a man's soul is in proportion to that of his body; the contrary of which is affirmed by our English physiognomical writers. Besides, if I understand Aristotle right, he speaketh only of the greatness of the action, and not of the person.

As for the Sentiments and the Diction, which now only remain to be spoken to, I thought I could afford them no stronger justification, than by producing parallel passages out of the best of our English writers. Whether this sameness of thought and expression, which I have quoted from them, proceeded from an agreement in their way of thinking, or whether they have borrowed from our Author, I leave the reader to determine; I shall adventure to affirm this of the sentiments of our Author, that they are generally the most familiar which I have ever met with, and at the same time delivered with the highest dignity of phrase; which brings me to speak of his Diction.——Here I shall only beg one postulatum, viz. That the greatest perfection of the language of a tragedy is, that it is not to be understood; which granted (as I think it must be), it will necessarily follow, that the only way to avoid this is by being too high or too low for the understanding, which will comprehend every thing within its reach. Those two extremities of style Mr. Dryden illustrates by the familiar image of two inns, which I shall term the aërial and the subterrestrial.

Horace goes farther, and showeth when it is proper to call at one of these inns, and when at the other:

> "*Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque,*
> *Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.*"

That he approveth of the sesquipedalia verba, is plain; for had not Telephus and Peleus used this sort of Diction in prosperity, they could not have dropt it in adversity. The

aërial inn, therefore (says Horace), is proper only to be frequented by princes and other great men, in the highest affluence of fortune; the subterrestrial is appointed for the entertainment of the poorer sort of people only, whom Horace advises,

———"*dolere sermone pedestri.*"

The true meaning of both which citations is, that bombast is the proper language for joy, and doggerel for grief; the latter of which is literally implied in the sermo pedestris, as the former is in the sesquipedalia verba.

Cicero recommendeth the former of these, "Quid est tam furiosum vel tragicum quam verborum sonitus inanis, nulla subjecta sententia neque scientia." What can be so proper for tragedy as a set of big sounding words, so contrived together as to convey no meaning? which I shall one day or other prove to be the sublime of Longinus. Ovid declareth absolutely for the latter inn:

"*Omne genus scripti gravitate tragœdia vincit.*"

Tragedy hath, of all writings, the greatest share in the Bathos; which is the profound of Scriblerus.

I shall not presume to determine which of these two styles be properer for tragedy——It sufficeth, that our Author excelleth in both. He is very rarely within sight through the whole play, either rising higher than the eye of your understanding can soar, or sinking lower than it careth to stoop. But here it may, perhaps, be observed, that I have given more frequent instances of authors who have imitated him in the sublime, than in the contrary. To which I answer, first, Bombast being properly a redundancy of genius, instances of this nature occur in poets, whose names do more honour to our Author, than the writers in the doggerel, which proceeds from a cool, calm, weighty way of thinking. Instances whereof are most frequently to be found in authors of a lower class. Secondly, That the works of such authors

are difficultly found at all. Thirdly, That it is a very hard task to read them, in order to extract these flowers from them. And lastly, it is very difficult to transplant them at all; they being like some flowers of a very nice nature, which will flourish in no soil but their own: for it is easy to transcribe a thought, but not the want of one. The EARL OF ESSEX, for instance, is a little garden of choice rarities, whence you can scarce transplant one line so as to preserve its original beauty. This must account to the reader for his missing the names of several of his acquaintance, which he had certainly found here, had I ever read their works; for which, if I have not a just esteem, I can at least say with Cicero, "Quæ non contemno, quippe quæ nunquam legerim." However, that the reader may meet with due satisfaction in this point, I have a young commentator from the university, who is reading over all the modern tragedies, at five shillings a dozen, and collecting all that they have stole from our Author, which shall shortly be added as an Appendix to this work.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

KING ARTHUR, a passionate sort of king, husband to Queen Dollallolla, of whom he stands a little in fear; father to Huncamunca, whom he is very fond of, and in love with Glumdalca	*Mr. Mullart.*
TOM THUMB THE GREAT, a little hero with a great soul, something violent in his temper, which is a little abated by his love for Huncamunca	*Young Verhuyck.*
GHOST OF GAFFER THUMB, a whimsical sort of Ghost	*Mr. Lacy.*
LORD GRIZZLE, extremely zealous for the liberty of the subject, very choleric in his temper, and in love with Huncamunca	*Mr. Jones.*
MERLIN, a conjuror, and in some sort father to Tom Thumb	*Mr. Hallam.*
NOODLE, DOODLE, Courtiers in place, and consequently of that party that is uppermost .	*Mr. Reynolds.* / *Mr. Wathan.*
FOODLE, a courtier that is out of place, and consequently of that party that is undermost	*Mr. Ayres.*
BAILIFF AND FOLLOWER, of the party of the plaintiff . .	*Mr. Peterson.* / *Mr. Hicks.*
PARSON, of the side of the church	*Mr. Watson.*

WOMEN

QUEEN DOLLALLOLLA, wife to King Arthur, and mother to Huncamunca, a woman entirely faultless, saving that she is a little given to drink, a little too much a virago towards her husband, and in love with Tom Thumb . .	*Mrs. Mullart.*

THE PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA, daughter to their majesties King Arthur and Queen Dollallolla, of a very sweet, gentle, and amorous disposition, equally in love with Lord Grizzle and Tom Thumb, and desirous to be married to them both . . . . . *Mrs. Jones.*

GLUMDALCA, of the Giants, a captive Queen, beloved by the King, but in love with Tom Thumb . . . . . *Mrs. Dove.*

CLEORA, MUSTACHA, } Maids of honour, in love with . } *Noodle.* *Doodle.*

Courtiers, Guards, Rebels, Drums, Trumpets, Thunder and Lightning.

SCENE.—*The Court of* KING ARTHUR, *and a Plain thereabouts.*

TOM THUMB THE GREAT

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Palace.*

DOODLE, NOODLE.

DOODLE. Sure such a day [1] as this was never seen!
The sun himself, on this auspicious day,
Shines like a beau in a new birth-day suit:
This down the seams embroidered, that the beams.
All nature wears one universal grin.

[1] Corneille recommends some very remarkable day wherein to fix the action of a tragedy. This the best of our tragical writers have understood to mean a day remarkable for the serenity of the sky, or what we generally call a fine summer's day: so that, according to this their exposition, the same months are proper for tragedy which are proper for pastoral. Most of our celebrated English tragedies, as Cato, Mariamne, Tamerlane, &c., begin with their observations on the morning. Lee seems to have come the nearest to this beautiful description of our author's:

"The morning dawns with an unwonted crimson,
The flowers all odorous seem, the garden birds
Sing louder, and the laughing sun ascends
The gaudy earth with an unusual brightness,
All nature smiles." —*Cæsar Borgia.*

Massinissa in the new Sophonisba is also a favourite of the sun;

"————The sun too seems,
As conscious of my joy, with broader eye

NOODLE. This day, O Mr. Doodle, is a day
Indeed!——A day, we never saw before.[2]
The mighty Thomas Thumb [3] victorious comes;
Millions of giants crowd his chariot wheels,
Giants![4] to whom the giants in Guildhall

To look abroad the world, and all things smile
Like Sophonisba."

Memnon, in the Persian Princess, makes the sun decline rising, that he may not peep on objects which would profane his brightness;

"———The morning rises slow,
And all those ruddy streaks that used to paint
The day's approach are lost in clouds, as if
The horrors of the night had sent 'em back,
To warn the sun he should not leave the sea,
To peep," &c.

[2] This line is highly conformable to the beautiful simplicity of the ancients. It hath been copied by almost every modern.

"Not to be is not to be in woe."—*State of Innocence.*

"Love is not sin but where 'tis sinful love."—*Don Sebastian.*

"Nature is nature, Lælius."—*Sophonisba.*

"Men are but men, we did not make ourselves."—*Revenge.*

[3] Dr. B——y reads: The mighty Tall-mast Thumb. Mr. D——s: The mighty Thumbing Thumb. Mr. T——d reads: Thundering. I think Thomas more agreeable to the great simplicity so apparent in our Author.

[4] That learned historian Mr. S——n, in the third number of his criticism on our Author, takes great pains to explode this passage. "It is," says he, "difficult to guess what giants are here meant, unless the giant Despair in the Pilgrim's Progress, or the giant Greatness in the Royal Villain; for I have heard of no other sort of giants in the reign of King Arthur." Petrus Burmannus makes three Tom Thumbs, one whereof he supposes to have been the same person whom the Greeks call Hercules; and that by these giants are to be understood the Centaurs slain by that hero. Another Tom Thumb he contends to have been no other than the Hermes Trismegistus of the ancients. The third Tom Thumb he places

Are infant dwarfs. They frown, and foam, and roar,
While Thumb, regardless of their noise, rides on.
So some cock-sparrow in a farmer's yard,
Hops at the head of an huge flock of turkeys.

DOODLE. When goody Thumb first brought this Thomas forth,
The Genius of our land triumphant reigned;
Then, then, O Arthur! did thy Genius reign.

NOODLE. They tell me it is whispered in the books[5]
Of all our sages, that this mighty hero,
By Merlin's art begot, hath not a bone
Within his skin, but is a lump of gristle.

DOODLE. Then 'tis a gristle of no mortal kind;
Some god, my Noodle, stept into the place

under the reign of King Arthur; to which third Tom Thumb, says he, the actions of the other two were attributed. Now, though I know that this opinion is supported by an assertion of Justus Lipsius, "Thomam illum Thumbum non alium quam Herculem fuisse satis constat," yet shall I venture to oppose one line of Mr. Midwinter against them all,

"In Arthur's court Tom Thumb did live."

"But then," says Dr. B——y, "if we place Tom Thumb in the court of King Arthur, it will be proper to place that court out of Britain, where no giants were ever heard of." Spenser, in his Fairy Queen, is of another opinion, where, describing Albion, he says,

"————Far within a savage nation dwelt
Of hideous giants."

And in the same canto,

"Then Elfar, with two brethren giants had,
The one of which had two heads————
The other three."

Risum teneatis, amici?

[5] "To whisper in books," says Mr. D——s, "is arrant nonsense." I am afraid this learned man does not sufficiently understand the extensive meaning of the word Whisper. If he had rightly understood what is meant by the "senses whisp'ring the soul," in the

Of Gaffer Thumb, and more than half-begot [6]
This mighty Tom.
NOODLE. Sure he was sent express [7]
From Heaven to be the pillar of our state.
Though small his body be, so very small
A chairman's leg is more than twice as large,
Yet is his soul like any mountain big,
And as a monster once brought forth a man
So doth this mouse contain a mighty mountain.[8]
DOODLE. Mountain, indeed! So terrible his name,
The giant nurses frighten children with it,[9]

Persian Princess, or what "whisp'ring like winds" is in Aurengzebe, or like thunder in another author, he would have understood this. Emmeline in Dryden sees a voice, but she was born blind, which is an excuse Panthea cannot plead in Cyrus, who hears a sight.

"————Your description will surpass
All fiction, painting, or dumb show of horror,
That ever ears yet heard, or eyes beheld."

When Mr. D——s understands these, he will understand whispering in books.

[6] "—Some ruffian stepped into his father's place,
And more than half begot him."—*Mary Queen of Scots.*

"—For Ulamar seems sent express from Heaven
To civilise this rugged Indian clime."—*Liberty Asserted.*

[8] "Omne majus continet in se minus, sed minus non in se majus continere potest," says Scaliger in Thumbo. I suppose he would have cavilled at these beautiful lines in the Earl of Essex:

"Thy most inveterate soul,
That looks through the foul prison of thy body."

And at those of Dryden:

"The palace is without too well designed;
Conduct me in, for I will view thy mind."—*Aurengzebe.*

[9] Mr. Banks hath copied this almost verbatim:

"It was enough to say, here's Essex come,
And nurses stilled their children with the fright."—*Earl of Essex.*



Whence flow those tears fast down thy blubbered cheek,
Like a swoln gutter, gushing through the streets?

From a drawing by M. Rooker.



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M. Rivers del.

And cry Tom Thumb is come, and, if you are
Naughty, will surely take the child away.

NOODLE. But hark! these trumpets speak the king's approach.[10]

DOODLE. He comes most luckily for my petition.

[*Flourish.*

SCENE II.

KING, QUEEN, GRIZZLE, NOODLE, DOODLE, FOODLE.

KING. Let nothing but a face of joy appear;[11]
The man who frowns this day shall lose his head,
That he may have no face to frown withal.
Smile, Dollallolla——Ha! what wrinkled sorrow
Hangs, sits, lies, frowns upon thy knitted brow?[12]
Whence flow those tears fast down thy blubbered cheeks,
Like a swoln gutter, gushing through the streets?

[10] The trumpet in a tragedy is generally as much as to say, Enter king, which makes Mr. Banks, in one of his plays, call it the trumpet's formal sound.

[11] Phraortes in the Captives seems to have been acquainted with King Arthur.

> "Proclaim a festival for seven days' space,
> Let the court shine in all its pomp and lustre,
> Let all our streets resound with shouts of joy;
> Let music's care-dispelling voice be heard;
> The sumptuous banquet, and the flowing goblet
> Shall warm the cheek, and fill the heart with gladness.
> Astarbe shall sit mistress of the feast."

[12] "Repentance frowns on thy contracted brow."—*Saphonizba.*

"Hung on his clouded brow, I marked despair."—*Ibid.*

"——————A sullen gloom
Scowls on his brow."—*Busiris.*

QUEEN. Excess of joy,[13] my lord, I've heard folks say,
Gives tears as certain as excess of grief.
KING. If it be so, let all men cry for joy,
Till my whole court be drowned with their tears;[14]
Nay, till they overflow my utmost land,
And leave me nothing but the sea to rule.
DOODLE. My liege, I a petition have here got.
KING. Petition me no petitions, sir, to-day;
Let other hours be set apart for business.

[13] Plato is of this opinion, and so is Mr. Banks:

"Behold these tears sprung with fresh pain and joy."
Earl of Essex.

[14] These floods are very frequent in the tragic authors.

"Near to some murmuring brook I'll lay me down,
Whose waters, if they should too shallow flow,
My tears shall swell them up till I will drown."
LEE'S *Sophonisba.*

"Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,
That were the world on fire they might have drown'd
The wrath of Heaven, and quench'd the mighty ruin."
Mithridates.

One author changes the waters of grief to those of joy:

"————These tears that sprung from tides of grief,
Are now augmented to a flood of joy."—*Cyrus the Great.*

Another,

"Turns all the streams of heat, and makes them flow
In pity's channel."—*Royal Villain.*

One drowns himself:

"————Pity like a torrent pours me down
Now I am drowning all within a deluge."—*Anna Bullen.*

Cyrus drowns the whole world:

"Our swelling grief
Shall melt into a deluge, and the world
Shall drown in tears."—*Cyrus the Great.*

To-day it is our pleasure to be drunk.[15]
And this our queen shall be as drunk as we.
QUEEN. (Though I already half seas over am[16])
If the capacious goblet overflow
With arrack punch——'fore George! I'll see it out;
Of rum and brandy I'll not taste a drop.
KING. Though 'rack, in punch, eight shillings be a quart,
And rum and brandy be no more than six,
Rather than quarrel you shall have your will. [*Trumpets.*
But, ha! the warrior comes; the great Tom Thumb,
The little hero, giant-killing boy,
Preserver of my kingdom, is arrived.

[15] An expression vastly beneath the dignity of tragedy, says Mr. D——s, yet we find the word he cavils at in the mouth of Mithridates less properly used, and applied to a more terrible idea:

"I would be drunk with death."—*Mithridates.*

The author of the New Sophonisba taketh hold of this monosyllable, and uses it pretty much to the same purpose:

"The Carthaginian sword with Roman blood
Was drunk."

I would ask Mr. D——s, which gives him the best idea, a drunken king, or a drunken sword?
Mr. Tate dresses up King Arthur's resolutions in heroic:

"Merry, my lord, o' th' captain's humour right,
I am resolved to be dead drunk to-night."

Lee also uses this charming word:

"Love's the drunkenness of the mind."—*Gloriana.*

[16] Dryden hath borrowed this, and applied it improperly:

"I'm half seas o'er in death."—*Cleomenes.*

SCENE III.

TOM THUMB, *to them, with* OFFICERS, PRISONERS, *and* ATTENDANTS.

KING. Oh! welcome most, most welcome to my arms.[17]
What gratitude can thank away the debt
Your valour lays upon me?
QUEEN. Oh! ye gods![18] [*Aside.*
TOM THUMB. When I'm not thanked at all, I'm thanked enough.
I've done my duty, and I've done no more.[19]
QUEEN. Was ever such a godlike creature seen? [*Aside.*
KING. Thy modesty's a candle to thy merit,[20]
It shines itself, and shows thy merit too.
But say, my boy, where didst thou leave the giants?
TOM THUMB. My liege, without the castle gates they stand,
The castle gates too low for their admittance.
KING. What look they like?
TOM THUMB. Like nothing but themselves.
QUEEN. And sure thou art like nothing but thyself.[21] [*Aside.*

[17] This figure is in great use among the tragedians:

"'Tis therefore, therefore 'tis."—*Victim.*

"I long, repent, repent, and long again."—*Busiris.*

[18] A tragical exclamation.

[19] This line is copied verbatim in the Captives.

[20] We find a candlestick for this candle in two celebrated authors:

"————Each star withdraws
His golden head, and burns within the socket."—*Nero.*

"A soul grown old and sunk into the socket."—*Sebastian.*

[21] This simile occurs very frequently among the dramatic writers of both kinds."

KING. Enough! the vast idea fills my soul.
I see them, yes, I see them now before me:
The monstrous, ugly, barb'rous sons of whores.
But ha! what form majestic strikes our eyes?
So perfect,[22] that it seems to have been drawn
By all the gods in council: so fair she is,
That surely at her birth the council paused,
And then at length cried out, This is a woman!

TOM THUMB. Then were the gods mistaken—she is not
A woman, but a giantess——whom we,
With much ado, have made a shift to haul[23]
Within the town; for she is by a foot[24]
Shorter than all her subject giants were.

[22] Mr. Lee hath stolen this thought from our Author:

"————This perfect face, drawn by the gods in council,
Which they were long in making."—*Luc. Jun. Brut.*

"———At his birth the heavenly council paused,
And then at last cried out, This is a man!"

Dryden hath improved this hint to the utmost perfection:

"So perfect that the very gods who formed you, wondered
At their own skill, and cried, A lucky hit
Has mended our design! Their envy hindered,
Or you had been immortal, and a pattern,
When Heaven would work for ostentation sake,
To copy out again."—*All for Love.*

Banks prefers the works of Michael Angelo to that of the gods:

"A pattern for the gods to make a man by,
Or Michael Angelo to form a statue."

[23] "It is impossible," says Mr. W——, "sufficiently to admire this natural easy line."

[24] This tragedy, which in most points resembles the ancients, differs from them in this, that it assigns the same honour to lowness of stature which they did to height. The gods and heroes in Homer and Virgil are continually described higher by the head than their followers, the contrary of which is observed by our Author. In short, to exceed on either side is equally admirable; and a man of three foot is as wonderful a sight as a man of nine.

GLUMDALCA. We yesterday were both a queen and wife,
One hundred thousand giants owned our sway.
Twenty whereof were married to ourself.
QUEEN. Oh! happy state of giantism——where husbands
Like mushrooms grow, whilst hapless we are forced
To be content, nay, happy thought, with one.
GLUMDALCA. But then to lose them all in one black day,
That the same sun, which, rising, saw me wife
To twenty giants, setting, should behold
Me widowed of them all.——My worn-out heart,
That ship, leaks fast, and the great heavy lading,
My soul, will quickly sink.[25]
QUEEN. Madam, believe
I view your sorrows with a woman's eye;
But learn to bear them with what strength you may,
To-morrow we will have our grenadiers
Drawn out before you, and you then shall choose
What husbands you think fit.
GLUMDALCA. Madam, I am
Your most obedient, and most humble servant.[26]
KING. Think, mighty princess, think this court your own,
Nor think the landlord me, this house my inn;
Call for whate'er you will you'll nothing pay.
I feel a sudden pain within my breast,
Nor know I whether it arise from love
Or only the wind-colic.[27] Time must show.

[25] "My blood leaks fast, and the great heavy lading
My soul will quickly sink."—*Mithridates.*

"My soul is like a ship."—*Injured Love.*

[26] This well-bred line seems to be copied in the Persian Princess:

"To be your humblest, and most faithful slave."

[27] This doubt of the king puts me in mind of a passage in the Captives, where the noise of feet is mistaken for the rustling of leaves,

"————Methinks I hear
The sound of feet;
No; 'twas the wind that shook yon cypress boughs."

Oh, Thumb! what do we to thy valour owe?
Ask some reward, great as we can bestow.
TOM THUMB. I ask not kingdoms, I can conquer those;
I ask not money, money I've enough;[28]
For what I've done, and what I mean to do,
For giants slain, and giants yet unborn,
Which I will slay,——if this be called a debt,
Take my receipt in full——I ask but this,
To sun myself in Huncamunca's eyes.[29]
KING. Prodigious bold request. [*Aside.*
QUEEN. Be still, my soul.[30] [*Aside.*
TOM THUMB. My heart is at the threshold of your mouth,
And waits its answer there.[31]——Oh! do not frown,
I've tried to reason's tune to tune my soul,
But love did overwind and crack the string.
Though Jove in Thunder had cried out, YOU SHA'N'T,

[28] Mr. Dryden seems to have this passage in his eye in the first page of Love Triumphant.

[29] Don Carlos, in the Revenge, suns himself in the charms of his mistress:

"While in the lustre of her charms I lay."

[30] A tragical phrase much in use.

[31] This speech hath been taken to pieces by several tragical authors, who seem to have rifled it, and shared its beauty amongst them:

"My soul waits at the portal of thy breast,
To ravish from thy lips the welcome news."
Anna Bullen.

"My soul stands listening at my ears."—*Cyrus the Great.*

"Love to his tune my jarring heart would bring,
But reason overwinds, and cracks the string."
Duke of Guise.

"————I should have loved,
Though Jove in muttering thunder had forbid it."
New Sophonisba.

"And when it (*my heart*) wild resolves to love no more,
Then is the triumph of excessive love."—*Ibid.*

I should have loved her still——for oh, strange fate,
Then when I loved her least I loved her most!

KING. It is resolved——the princess is your own.

TOM THUMB. Oh! happy, happy, happy, happy, Thumb.[32]

QUEEN. Consider, sir, reward your soldier's merit, but
Give not Huncamunca to Tom Thumb.

KING. Tom Thumb; Odzooks, my wide extended realm
Knows not a name so glorious as Tom Thumb.
Let Macedonia Alexander boast,
Let Rome her Cæsars and her Scipios show.
Her Messieurs France, let Holland boast Mynheers,
Ireland her O's, her Mac's let Scotland boast,
Let England boast no other than Tom Thumb.

QUEEN. Though greater yet his boasted merit was,
He shall not have my daughter, that is pos'.

KING. Ha! sayst thou Dollallolla!

QUEEN. I say he sha'n't.

KING. Then by our royal self we swear you lie.[33]

QUEEN. Who but a dog, who but a dog[34]
Would use me as thou dost? Me, who have lain
These twenty years so loving by thy side?[35]
But I will be revenged. I'll hang myself,
Then tremble all who did this match persuade,
For riding on a cat from high I'll fall,[36]
And squirt down royal vengeance on you all.

[32] Massinissa is one-fourth less happy than Tom Thumb:

"Oh! happy, happy, happy."—*Ibid.*

[33] "No by myself."—*Anna Bullen.*

[34] "——————Who caused
This dreadful revolution in my fate.
ULAMAR. Who but a dog, who but a dog?"
Liberty Asserted.

[35] "——————A bride,
Who twenty years lay loving by your side."—*Banks.*

[36] "For borne upon a cloud from high I'll fall,
And rain down royal vengeance on you all."
Albion Queens.

FOODLE. Her majesty the queen is in a passion.[37]
KING. Be she, or be she not [38]——I'll to the girl
And pave thy way, oh Thumb——Now by ourself,
We were indeed a pretty king of clouts
To truckle to her will——For when by force
Or art the wife her husband over-reaches,
Give him the petticoat, and her the breeches.
TOM THUMB. Whisper ye winds that Huncamunca's mine;
Echoes repeat, that Huncamunca's mine!
The dreadful business of the war is o'er,
And beauty, heavenly beauty! crowns my toils!
I've thrown the bloody garment now aside
And hymeneal sweets invite my bride.
So when some chimney-sweeper all the day
Hath through dark paths pursued the sooty way,
At night, to wash his hands and face he flies,
And in his t'other shirt with his Brickdusta lies.[39]

SCENE IV.

GRIZZLE. [*Solus.*] Where art thou, Grizzle![40] where are now thy glories?
Where are the drums that waken thee to honour?

[37] An information very like this we have in the Tragedy of Love; where Cyrus having stormed in the most violent manner, Cyaxares observes very calmly,

"Why, nephew Cyrus—you are moved."

[38] "'Tis in your choice,
Love me, or love me not."—*Conquest of Granada.*

[39] There is not one beauty in this charming speech, but what hath been borrowed by almost every tragic writer.

[40] Mr. Banks has (I wish I could not say too servilely) imitated this of Grizzle in his Earl of Essex:

"Where art thou, Essex," &c.

Greatness is a laced coat from Monmouth Street,
Which fortune lends us for a day to wear,
To-morrow puts it on another's back.
The spiteful sun but yesterday surveyed
His rival high as Saint Paul's cupola;
Now may he see me as Fleet Ditch laid low.

SCENE V.

QUEEN, GRIZZLE.

QUEEN. Teach me to scold, prodigious-minded Grizzle.[41]
Mountain of treason, ugly as the devil,
Teach this confounded hateful mouth of mine
To spout forth words malicious as thyself,
Words which might shame all Billingsgate to speak.
GRIZZLE. Far be it from my pride to think my tongue
Your royal lips can in that art instruct,
Wherein you so excel. But may I ask,
Without offence, wherefore my queen would scold?
QUEEN. Wherefore? Oh! blood and thunder! ha'n't you heard
(What every corner of the court resounds)
That little Thumb will be a great man made?
GRIZZLE. I heard it, I confess——for who, alas!
Can always stop his ears[42]——But would my teeth
By grinding knives had first been set on edge!
QUEEN. Would I had heard, at the still noon of night
The hallalloo of fire in every street!
Odsbobs! I have a mind to hang myself,

[41] The Countess of Nottingham in the Earl of Essex is apparently acquainted with Dollallolla.

[42] Grizzle was not probably possessed of that glue of which Mr. Banks speaks in his Cyrus:

"I'll glue my ears to every word."

To think I should a grandmother be made
By such a rascal——Sure the king forgets,
When in a pudding, by his mother put,
The bastard, by a tinker, on a stile
Was dropped.—O, good Lord Grizzle! can I bear
To see him from a pudding mount the throne?
Or can, oh can! my Huncamunca bear
To take a pudding's offspring to her arms?

GRIZZLE. Oh horror! horror! horror! cease, my queen,
Thy voice, like twenty screech-owls, wracks my brain.[43]

QUEEN. Then rouse thy spirit—we may yet prevent
This hated match—

GRIZZLE. We will; nor fate itself,
Should it conspire with Thomas Thumb, should cause it
I'll swim through seas; I'll ride upon the clouds;
I'll dig the earth; I'll blow out every fire;
I'll rave; I'll rant; I'll rise; I'll rush; I'll roar;
Fierce as the man whom smiling dolphins bore,[44]
From the prosaic to poetic shore.
I'll tear the scoundrel into twenty pieces.[45]

QUEEN. Oh, no! prevent the match, but hurt him not:
For, though I would not have him have my daughter,
Yet can we kill the man that killed the giants?

GRIZZLE. I tell you, madam, it was all a trick,
He made the giants first, and then he killed them;
As fox-hunters bring foxes to the wood,

[43] "Screech-owls, dark ravens and amphibious monsters,
Are screaming in that voice."—*Mary Queen of Scots.*

[44] This epithet to a dolphin doth not give one so clear an idea as were to be wished; a smiling fish seeming a little more difficult to be imagined than a flying fish. Mr. Dryden is of opinion that smiling is the property of reason, and that no irrational creature can smile:

"Smiles not allowed to beasts from reason move."—
State of Innocence.

[45] The reader may see all the beauties of this speech in a late ode, called the Naval Lyrick.

And then with hounds they drive them out again.
QUEEN. How! have you seen no giants? Are there not,
Now, in the yard, ten thousand proper giants?
GRIZZLE. Indeed I cannot positively tell,
But firmly do believe there is not one.[46]
QUEEN. Hence! from my sight! thou traitor, hie away;
By all my stars! thou enviest Tom Thumb.
Go, sirrah! go, hie away hie![47]——thou art
A setting-dog, be gone.
GRIZZLE. Madam, I go,
Tom Thumb shall feel the vengeance you have raised:
So, when two dogs are fighting in the streets,
With a third dog one of the two dogs meets,
With angry teeth he bites him to the bone,
And this dog smarts for what that dog has done.

[46] These lines are written in the same key with those in the Earl of Essex:

"Why sayst thou so? I love thee well, indeed
I do, and thou shalt find by this, 'tis true."

Or with this in Cyrus:

"The most heroic that ever was."

And with above half of the modern tragedies.

[47] Aristotle, in that excellent work of his, which is very justly styled his masterpiece, earnestly recommends using the terms of art, however coarse or even indecent they may be. Mr. Tate is of the same opinion:

"BRU. Do not, like young hawks, fetch a course about,
Your game flies fair.

FRA. Do not fear it.
He answers you in your hawking phrase."
Injured Love.

I think these two great authorities are sufficient to justify Dollallolla in the use of the phrase, "Hie away, hie!" when in the same line she says she is speaking to a setting-dog.

SCENE VII.

QUEEN. [*Sola.*] And whither shall I go?——Alack a day!
I love Tom Thumb——but must not tell him so;
For what's a woman when her virtue's gone?
A coat without its lace; wig out of buckle;
A stocking with a hole in't——I can't live
Without my virtue, or without Tom Thumb.
Then let me weigh them in two equal scales,[48]
In this scale put my virtue, that Tom Thumb.
Alas! Tom Thumb is heavier than my virtue.
But hold!—perhaps I may be left a widow:
This match prevented, then Tom Thumb is mine:
In that dear hope I will forget my pain.
So, when some wench to Tothill Bridewell's sent,
With beating hemp and flogging she's content,
She hopes in time to ease her present pain,
At length is free and walks the streets again.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

BAILIFF. FOLLOWER.

BAILIFF. Come on, my trusty follower, come on,
This day discharge thy duty, and at night
A double mug of beer, and beer shall glad thee.

[48] We meet with such another pair of scales in Dryden's King Arthur:

"Arthur and Oswald and their different fates,
Are weighing now within the scales of Heaven."

Also in Sebastian:

"This hour my lot is weighing in the scales."

Stand here by me, this way must Noodle pass.
FOLLOWER. No more, no more, O Bailiff! every word
Inspires my soul with virtue——Oh! I long
To meet the enemy in the street—and nab him:
To lay arresting hands upon his back,
And drag him trembling to the spunging-house.
BAILIFF. There when I have him, I will spunge upon him.
Oh! glorious thought, by the sun, moon, and stars,[49]
I will enjoy it, though it be in thought!
Yes, yes, my follower, I will enjoy it.
FOLLOWER. Enjoy it then some other time, for now
Our prey approaches.
BAILIFF. Let us retire.

SCENE II.

TOM THUMB, NOODLE, BAILIFF, FOLLOWER.

TOM THUMB. Trust me, my Noodle, I am wondrous sick,
For though I love the gentle Huncamunca,
Yet at the thought of marriage I grow pale:
For oh!—but swear thou'lt keep it ever secret,
I will unfold a tale will make thee stare.[50]
NOODLE. I swear by lovely Huncamunca's charms.
TOM THUMB. Then know—my grandmamma hath often said,

[49] Mr. Rowe is generally imagined to have taken some hints from this scene in his character of Bajazet; but as he, of all the tragic writers, bears the least resemblance to our Author in his diction, I am unwilling to imagine he would condescend to copy him in this particular.

[50] This method of surprising an audience by raising their expectation to the highest pitch, and then baulking it, hath been practised with great success by most of our tragical authors.

Tom Thumb, beware of marriage.[51]
NOODLE. Sir, I blush
To think a warrior, great in arms as you,
Should be affrighted by his grandmamma;
Can an old woman's empty dreams deter
The blooming hero from the virgin's arms?
Think of the joy that will your soul alarm,
When in her fond embraces clasped you lie,
While on her panting breast dissolved in bliss,
You pour out all Tom Thumb in every kiss.
TOM THUMB. Oh! Noodle, thou hast fired my eager soul;
Spite of my grandmother she shall be mine;
I'll hug, caress, I'll eat her up with love:
Whole days, and nights, and years shall be too short
For our enjoyment, every sun shall rise
Blushing to see us in our bed together.[52]
NOODLE. Oh, sir! this purpose of your soul pursue.

[51] Almeyda in Sebastian is in the same distress:

"Sometimes methinks I hear the groan of ghosts,
Thin hollow sounds and lamentable screams;
Then like a dying echo from afar
My mother's voice that cries, Wed not, Almeyda;
Forewarned, Almeyda, marriage is thy crime."

[52] "As very well he may, if he hath any modesty in him," says Mr. D——s. The author of Busiris is extremely zealous to prevent the sun's blushing at any indecent object; and therefore on all such occasions he addresses himself to the sun, and desires him to keep out of the way:

"Rise never more, O sun! let night prevail,
Eternal darkness close the world's wide scene."—*Busiris.*

"Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning."—*Ibid.*

Mr. Banks makes the sun perform the office of Hymen; and therefore not likely to be disgusted at such a sight:

"The sun sets forth like a gay brideman with you."
Mary Queen of Scots.

BAILIFF. Oh, sir! I have an action against you.
NOODLE. At whose suit is it?
BAILIFF. At your tailor's, sir.
Your tailor put this warrant in my hands,
And I arrest you, sir, at his commands.
TOM THUMB. Ha! dogs! Arrest my friend before my face!
Think you Tom Thumb will suffer this disgrace!
But let vain cowards threaten by their word,
Tom Thumb shall show his anger by his sword.
[*Kills the* Bailiff *and his* Follower.
BAILIFF. Oh! I am slain!
FOLLOWER. I am murdered also,
And to the shades, the dismal shades below,
My bailiff's faithful follower I go.
NOODLE. Go then to hell like rascals as you are,[53]
And give our service to the bailiffs there.
TOM THUMB. Thus perish all the bailiffs in the land,
Till debtors at noon-day shall walk the streets,
And no one fear a bailiff or his writ.

SCENE III.—*The* PRINCESS HUNCAMUNCA'S *Apartment.*

HUNCAMUNCA, CLEORA, MUSTACHA.

HUNCAMUNCA. Give me some music[54]—see that it be sad.
CLEORA. [*Sings.*]

[53] Neurmahal sends the same message to heaven:

"For I would have you, when you upwards move,
Speak kindly of us to our friends above."—*Aurengzebe.*

We find another to hell in the Persian Princess:

"Villain, get thee down
To hell, and tell them that the fray's begun."

[54] Anthony gives the same command in the same words.



If you had fallen in love with a Grenadier, I should not have wondered at it.

From a drawing by William Hogarth.

I.

Cupid, ease a love-sick maid,
Bring thy quiver to her aid;
With equal ardour wound the swain:
Beauty should never sigh in vain.

II.

Let him feel the pleasing smart,
Drive the arrow through his heart;
When one you wound, you then destroy;
When both you kill, you kill with joy.

HUNCAMUNCA. O Tom Thumb! Tom Thumb! Wherefore art thou Tom Thumb?[55]
Why hadst thou not been born of royal race?
Why had not mighty Bantam been thy father?
Or else the king of Brentford, Old or New?

MUSTACHA. I am surprised that your highness can give yourself a moment's uneasiness about that little insignificant fellow, Tom Thumb the Great[56]—one properer for a plaything than a husband.—Were he my husband his horns should be as long as his body.—If you had fallen in love with a grenadier, I should not have wondered at it.—If you had fallen in love with something; but to fall in love with nothing!

HUNCAMUNCA. Cease, my Mustacha, on thy duty cease. The zephyr, when in flowery vales it plays,

[55] "Oh! Marius, Marius, wherefore art thou Marius."
OTWAY'S *Marius.*

[56] Nothing is more common than these seeming contradictions; such as,

"Haughty weakness."—*Victim.*

"Great small world."—*Noah's Flood.*

Is not so soft, so sweet as Thummy's breath.
The dove is not so gentle to its mate.

MUSTACHA. The dove is every bit as proper for a husband.—Alas! Madam, there's not a beau about the court looks so little like a man.—He is perfect butterfly, a thing without substance, and almost without shadow too.

HUNCAMUNCA. This rudeness is unseasonable, desist;
Or I shall think this railing comes from love.
Tom Thumb's a creature of that charming form,
That no one can abuse, unless they love him.

MUSTACHA. Madam, the king.

SCENE IV.

KING, HUNCAMUNCA.

KING. Let all but Huncamunca leave the room.
[*Exeunt* Cleora *and* Mustacha.
Daughter, I have observed of late some grief
Unusual in your countenance——your eyes,
That, like two open windows used to show
The lovely beauty of the rooms within,
Have now two blinds before them [57]—What is the cause?
Say, have you not enough of meat and drink?
We've given strict orders not to have you stinted.

HUNCAMUNCA. Alas! my lord, I value not myself,
That once I ate two fowls and half a pig;
Small is that praise! but oh! a maid may want

[57] Lee hath improved this metaphor:

"Dost thou not view joy peeping from my eyes,
The casements opened wide to gaze on thee?
So Rome's glad citizens to windows rise,
When they some young triumpher fain would see."
Gloriana.

What she can neither eat nor drink.[58]

KING. What's that!

HUNCAMUNCA. O spare my blushes; but I mean a husband.[59]

KING. If that be all, I have provided one,
A husband great in arms, whose warlike sword
Streams with the yellow blood of slaughtered giants,
Whose name in Terra Incognita is known,
Whose valour, wisdom, virtue, make a noise,
Great as the kettledrums of twenty armies.

[58] Almahide hath the same contempt for these appetites:

"To eat and drink can no perfection be."
Conquest of Granada.

The Earl of Essex is of a different opinion, and seems to place the chief happiness of a general therein:

"Were but commanders half so well rewarded,
Then they might eat."—BANKS *Earl of Essex.*

But if we may believe one, who knows more than either, the devil himself; we shall find eating to be an affair of more moment than is generally imagined:

"Gods are immortal only by their food."
LUCIFER, in the *State of Innocence.*

[59] "This expression is enough of itself," says Mr. D——s, "utterly to destroy the character of Huncamunca!" yet we find a woman of no abandoned character in Dryden adventuring farther, and thus excusing herself:

"To speak our wishes first, forbid it pride,
Forbid it modesty; true, they forbid it,
But Nature does not: when we are athirst,
Or hungry, will imperious Nature stay,
Nor eat, nor drink, before 'tis bid fall on?"—*Cleomenes.*

Cassandra speaks before she is asked: Huncamunca afterwards. Cassandra speaks her wishes to her lover: Huncamunca only to her father.

HUNCAMUNCA. Whom does my royal father mean?
KING. Tom Thumb.
HUNCAMUNCA. Is it possible?
KING. Ha! the window-blinds are gone,
A country dance of joy is in your face.[60]
Your eyes spit fire, your cheeks grow red as beef.
HUNCAMUNCA. O, there's a magic music in that sound,
Enough to turn me into beef indeed!
Yes, I will own, since licensed by your word,
I'll own Tom Thumb the cause of all my grief.
For him I've sighed, I've wept, I've gnawed my sheets.
KING. Oh! thou shalt gnaw thy tender sheets no more.
A husband thou shalt have to mumble now.
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! happy sound! henceforth let no one tell
That Huncamunca shall lead apes in hell.
Oh! I am overjoyed!
KING. I see thou art.
Joy lightens in thy eyes, and thunders from thy brows;
Transports, like lightning, dart along thy soul,
As small-shot through a hedge.[61]
HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! say not small.
KING. This happy news shall on our tongue ride post,
Ourself we bear the happy news to Thumb.
Yet think not, daughter, that your powerful charms
Must still detain the hero from his arms;
Various his duty, various his delight;

[60] "Her eyes resistless magic bear,
Angels, I see, and gods are dancing there."
LEE'S *Sophonisba.*

[61] Mr. Dennis, in that excellent tragedy, called Liberty Asserted, which is thought to have given so great a stroke to the late French king, hath frequent imitations of this beautiful speech of King Arthur:

"Conquest lightening in his eyes, and thundering in his arm.
Joy lightened in her eyes.
Joys like lightning dart along my soul."

Now in his turn to kiss, and now to fight;
And now to kiss again. So, mighty Jove,
When with excessive thundering tired above,
Comes down to earth, and takes a bit——and then
Flies to his trade of thundering back again.[62]

SCENE V.

GRIZZLE, HUNCAMUNCA.

GRIZZLE. Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh![63]
Thy pouting breasts, like kettledrums of brass,
Beat everlasting loud alarms of joy;
As bright as brass they are, and oh, as hard;
Oh Huncamunca, Huncamunca! oh!

HUNCAMUNCA. Ha! dost thou know me, princess as I am,
That thus of me you dare to make your game?[64]

[62] "Jove with excessive thundering tired above,
Comes down for ease, enjoys a nymph, and then
Mounts dreadful, and to thundering goes again."
Gloriana.

[63] This beautiful line, which ought, says Mr. W——, to be written in gold, is imitated in the New Sophonisba:

"Oh! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, oh!
Oh! Narva, Narva, oh!"

The author of a song, called Duke upon Duke, hath improved it:

"Alas! O Nick, O Nick, alas!"

Where by the help of a little false-spelling, you have two meanings in the repeated words.

[64] Edith, in the Bloody Brother, speaks to her lover in the same familiar language:

"Your grace is full of game."

GRIZZLE. Oh Huncamunca, well I know that you
A princess are, and a king's daughter too;
But love no meanness scorns, no grandeur fears;
Love often lords into the cellar bears,
And bids the sturdy porter come up stairs.
For what's too high for love, or what's too low?
Oh Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!

HUNCAMUNCA. But, granting all you say of love were true,
My love, alas! is to another due!
In vain to me a suitoring you come,
For I'm already promised to Tom Thumb.

GRIZZLE. And can my princess such a durgen wed,
One fitter for your pocket than your bed!
Advised by me the worthless baby shun,
Or you will ne'er be brought to bed of one.
Oh take me to thy arms, and never flinch,
Who am a man by Jupiter every inch.
Then while in joys together lost we lie,
I'll press thy soul while gods stand wishing by.[65]

HUNCAMUNCA. If, sir, what you insinuate you prove,
All obstacles of promise you remove;
For all engagements to a man must fall,
Whene'er that man is proved no man at all.

GRIZZLE. Oh! let him seek some dwarf, some fairy miss
Where no joint-stool must lift him to the kiss!
But by the stars and glory you appear
Much fitter for a Prussian grenadier;
One globe alone on Atlas' shoulders rests,
Two globes are less than Huncamunca's breasts;
The milky way is not so white, that's flat,
And sure thy breasts are full as large as that.

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh, sir, so strong your eloquence I find,
It is impossible to be unkind.

[65] "Traverse the glitt'ring chambers of the sky,
Borne on a cloud in view of fate I'll lie,
And press her soul while gods stand wishing by."—*Hannibal.*

GRIZZLE. Ah! speak that o'er again, and let the sound
From one pole to another pole rebound;[66]
The earth and sky each be a battledore,
And keep the sound, that shuttlecock, up an hour;
To Doctors' Commons for a licence I,
Swift as an arrow from a bow, will fly.

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh no! lest some disaster we should meet,
'Twere better to be married at the Fleet.

GRIZZLE. Forbid it, all ye powers, a princess should
By that vile place contaminate her blood;
My quick return shall to my charmer prove
I travel on the post-horses of love.[67]

HUNCAMUNCA. Those post-horses to me will seem too slow
Though they should fly swift as the gods, when they
Ride on behind that post-boy, Opportunity.

SCENE VI.

TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA.

TOM THUMB. Where is my princess, where's my Huncamunca?
Where are those eyes, those cardmatches of love,

[66] "Let the four winds from distant corners meet,
And on their wings first bear it into France;
Then back again to Edina's proud walls,
Till victim to the sound th' aspiring city falls."—*Albion Queens.*

[67] I do not remember any metaphors so frequent in the tragic poets, as those borrowed from riding post:

"The gods and opportunity ride post."—*Hannibal.*

"———Let's rush together,
For death rides post."—*Duke of Guise.*

"Destruction gallops to thy murder post."—*Gloriana.*

That light up all with love my waxen soul? [68]
Where is that face, which artful nature made
In the same mould where Venus' self was cast? [69]

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! what is music to the ear that's deaf,[70]

[68] This image too very often occurs:

"———Bright as when thy eye
First lighted up our loves."—*Aurengzebe.*

"This not a crown alone lights up my name."—*Busiris.*

[69] There is a great dissension among the poets concerning the method of making man. One tells his mistress that the mould she was made in being lost, heaven cannot form such another. Lucifer, in Dryden, gives a merry description of his own formation:

"Whom heaven neglecting, made and scarce designed,
But threw me in for number to the rest."—*State of Innocence.*

In one place the same poet supposes man to be made of metal:

"I was formed
Of that coarse metal, which when she was made,
The gods threw by for rubbish."—*All for Love.*

In another, of dough:

"When the gods moulded up the paste of man,
Some of their clay was left upon their hands,
And so they made Egyptians."—*Cleomenes.*

In another, of clay:

"———Rubbish of remaining clay."—*Sebastian.*

One makes the soul of wax:

"Her waxen soul begins to melt apace."—*Anna Bullen.*

Another of flint:

"Sure our two souls have somewhere been acquainted,
In former beings, or struck out together,
One spark to Afric flew, and one to Portugal."—*Sebastian*

To omit the great quantities of iron, brazen and leaden souls which are so plenty in modern authors—I cannot omit the dress of a soul as we find it in Dryden:

"Souls shirted but with air."—*King Arthur.*

Or a goose-pie to him that has no taste?
What are the praises now to me, since I
Am promised to another?

TOM THUMB. Ha! promised?

HUNCAMUNCA. Too sure; 'tis written in the book of fate.

TOM THUMB. Then will I tear away the leaf [71]
Wherein it's writ, or if fate won't allow
So large a gap within its journal-book,
I'll blot it out at least.

SCENE VII.

GLUMDALCA, TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA.

GLUMDALCA. I need not ask if you are Huncamunca.[72]
Your brandy-nose proclaims——

HUNCAMUNCA. I am a princess;
Nor need I ask who you are.

GLUMDALCA. A giantess;
The queen of those who made and unmade queens.

Nor can I pass by a particular sort of soul in a particular sort of description, in the New Sophonisba:

> "Ye mysterious powers,
> ———Whether through your gloomy depths I wander,
> Or on the mountains walk, give me the calm,
> The steady smiling soul, where wisdom sheds
> Eternal sunshine, and eternal joy."

[70] This line Mr. Banks has plundered entire in his Anna Bullen.

[71] "Good heaven! the book of fate before me lay,
But to tear out the journal of that day.
Or if the order of the world below
Will not the gap of one whole day allow,
Give me that minute when she made her vow."
Conquest of Granada.

[72] I know some of the commentators have imagined that Mr. Dryden in the altercative scene between Cleopatra and Octavia, a

HUNCAMUNCA. The man, whose chief ambition is to be
My sweetheart, hath destroyed these mighty giants.
GLUMDALCA. Your sweetheart? Dost thou think the man, who once
Hath worn my easy chains, will e'er wear thine?
HUNCAMUNCA. Well may your chains be easy, since, if fame
Says true, they have been tried on twenty husbands.
The glove or boot, so many times pulled on.[73]
May well sit easy on the hand or foot.
GLUMDALCA. I glory in the number, and when I
Sit poorly down, like thee, content with one,
Heaven change this face for one as bad as thine.
HUNCAMUNCA. Let me see nearer what this beauty is,
That captivates the heart of men by scores.
[*Holds a candle to her face.*
Oh! Heaven, thou art as ugly as the devil.
GLUMDALCA. You'd give the best of shoes within your shop
To be but half so handsome.
HUNCAMUNCA. Since you come
To that, I'll put my beauty to the test:[74]
Tom Thumb, I'm yours, if you with me will go.
GLUMDALCA. Oh! stay, Tom Thumb, and you alone shall fill

scene which Mr. Addison inveighs against with great bitterness, is much beholden to our Author. How just this their observation is, I will not presume to determine.

[73] "A cobbling poet, indeed," says Mr. D——, and yet I believe we may find as monstrous images in the Tragic Authors: I'll put down one:

"Untie your folded thoughts, and let them dangle loose as a bride's hair." *Injured Love.*

Which line seems to have as much title to a milliner's shop, as our Author's to a shoemaker's.

[74] Mr. L——— takes occasion in this place to commend the great care of our Author to preserve the metre of blank verse, in which

That bed where twenty giants used to lie.

TOM THUMB. In the balcony that o'erhangs the stage,
I've seen a whore two 'prentices engage;
One half a crown does in his fingers hold,
The other shows a little piece of gold;
She the half guinea wisely does purloin,
And leaves the larger and the baser coin.

GLUMDALCA. Left, scorned, and loathed for such a chit as this;
I feel the storm that's rising in my mind,[75]
Tempests and whirlwinds rise, and roll and roar.
I'm all within a hurricane, as if
The world's four winds were pent within my carcase.[76]
Confusion, horror, murder, guts and death![77]

SCENE VIII.

KING, GLUMDALCA.

KING. Sure never was so sad a king as I;[78]
My life is worn as ragged as a coat

Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher were so notoriously negligent; and the moderns, in imitation of our Author, so laudably observant:

> "———— Then does
> Your majesty believe that he can be
> A traitor?"—*Earl of Essex.*

Every page of Sophonisba gives us instances of this excellence.

[75] "Love mounts and rolls about my stormy mind."—*Aurengzebe.*

"Tempests and whirlwinds thro' my bosom move."—*Cleomenes.*

[76] "With such a furious tempest on his brow,
As if the world's four winds were pent within
His blustering carcase."—*Anna Bullen.*

[77] Verba Tragica.

[78] This speech has been terribly mauled by the poet.

A beggar wears;[79] a prince should put it off.
To love a captive and a giantess.[80]
Oh love! Oh love! how great a king art thou!
My tongue's thy trumpet, and thou trumpetest,
Unknown to me, within me. Oh Glumdalca!
Heaven thee designed a giantess to make,
But an angelic soul was shuffled in.[81]
I am a multitude of walking griefs,[82]
And only on her lips the balm is found,
To spread a plaister that might cure them all.[83]

GLUMDALCA. What do I hear?

KING. What do I see!

GLUMDALCA. Oh!

KING. Ah!

GLUMDALCA. Ah! wretched queen![84]

[79] "My life is worn to rags;
Not worth a prince's wearing."—*Love Triumphant.*

[80] "Must I beg the pity of my slave?
Must a king beg! But love's a greater king,
A tyrant, nay, a devil that possesses me.
He tunes the organ of my voice and speaks,
Unknown to me, within me."—*Sebastian.*

[81] "When thou wert formed heaven did a man begin;
But a brute soul by chance was shuffled in."—*Aurengzebe.*

[82] "I am a multitude
Of walking griefs."—*New Sophonisba.*

[83] "I will take thy scorpion blood,
And lay it to my grief till I have ease."—*Anna Bullen.*

[84] Our Author, who every where shows his great penetration into human nature, here outdoes himself: where a less judicious poet would have raised a long scene of whining love, he, who understood the passions better, and that so violent an affection as this must be too big for utterance, chooses rather to send his characters off in this sullen and doleful manner: in which admirable conduct he is imitated by the author of the justly celebrated Eurydice. Dr. Young seems to point at this violence of passion:

KING. Oh! wretched king!
GLUMDALCA. Ah![85]
KING. Oh!

SCENE IX.

TOM THUMB, HUNCAMUNCA, PARSON.

PARSON. Happy's the wooing that's not long a doing;
For, if I guess right, Tom Thumb, this night,
Shall give a being to a new Tom Thumb.
TOM THUMB. It shall be my endeavour so to do.
HUNCAMUNCA. O! fie upon you, sir, you make me blush.
TOM THUMB. It is the virgin's sign, and suits you well:
I know not where, nor how, nor what I am;[86]
I'm so transported I have lost myself.[87]

"Passion chokes
Their words, and they're the statues of despair."

And Seneca tells us, "Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent." The story of the Egyptian king in Herodotus is too well known to need to be inserted; I refer the more curious reader to the excellent Montaigne, who hath written an essay on this subject.

[85] "To part is death
'Tis death to part.
Ah!
Oh!"—*Don Carlos.*

[86] "Nor know I whether
What am I, who or where."—*Busiris.*

"I was I know not what, and am I know not how."—*Gloriana.*

[87] To understand sufficiently the beauty of this passage, it will be necessary that we comprehend every man to contain two selfs. I shall not attempt to prove this from philosophy, which the poets make so plainly evident.
One runs away from the other:

"Let me demand your majesty,
Why fly you from yourself?"—*Duke of Guise.*

HUNCAMUNCA. Forbid it, all ye stars, for you're so small,
That were you lost you'd find yourself no more;
So the unhappy sempstress once, they say,
Her needle in a pottle, lost, of hay;
In vain she looked, and looked, and made her moan,
For ah, the needle was for ever gone.

In a second, one self is a guardian to the other:

"Leave me the care of me."—*Conquest of Granada.*

Again,

"Myself am to myself less near."—*Ibid.*

In the same, the first self is proud of the second:

"I myself am proud of me."—*State of Innocence.*

In a third, distrustful to him:

"Fain I would tell, but whisper it in my ear,
That none besides might hear, nay, not myself."
Earl of Essex.

In a fourth, honours him:

"I honour Rome,
And honour too myself."—*Sophonisba.*

In the fifth, at variance with him:

"Leave me not thus at variance with myself."—*Busiris.*

Again, in a sixth:

"I find myself divided from myself."—*Medea.*

"She seemed the sad effigies of herself."—*Banks.*

"Assist me, Zulema, if thou wouldst be
The friend thou seemest, assist me against me."
Albion Queens.

From all which it appears that there are two selfs; and therefore Tom Thumb's losing himself is no such solecism as it hath been represented by men rather ambitious of criticising, than qualified to criticise.

PARSON. Long may they live, and love, and propagate,
Till the whole land be peopled with Tom Thumbs.
So when the Cheshire cheese a maggot breeds,
Another and another still succeeds:
By thousands and ten thousands they increase,
Till one continued maggot fills the rotten cheese.[88]

SCENE X.

NOODLE, *and then* GRIZZLE.

NOODLE. Sure Nature means to break her solid chain,
Or else unfix the world, and in a rage
To hurl it from its axletree and hinges;[89]
All things are so confused, the king's in love,
The queen is drunk, the princess married is.
GRIZZLE. Oh! Noodle, hast thou Huncamunca seen?
NOODLE. I've seen a thousand sights this day, where none
Are by the wonderful bitch herself outdone;
The king, the queen, and all the court are sights.
GRIZZLE. D——n your delay, you trifler, are you drunk, ha?
I will not hear one word but Huncamunca.[90]

[88] Mr. F—— imagines this parson to have been a Welsh one from his simile.

[89] Our Author hath been plundered here, according to custom:

"Great Nature, break thy chain that links together
The fabric of the world, and make a chaos
Like that within my soul."—*Love Triumphant.*

"Startle nature, unfix the globe,
And hurl it from its axletree and hinges."—*Albion Queens.*

"The tott'ring earth seems sliding off its props."

[90] "D——n your delay, ye torturers proceed,
I will not hear one word but Almahide."—*Conquest of Granada.*

NOODLE. By this time she is married to Tom Thumb.
GRIZZLE. My Huncamunca? [91]
NOODLE. Your Huncamunca,
Tom Thumb's Huncamunca, every man's Huncamunca.
GRIZZLE. If this be true, all womankind are damned.
NOODLE. If it be not, may I be so myself.
GRIZZLE. See where she comes! I'll not believe a word
Against that face, upon whose ample brow [92]
Sits innocence with majesty enthroned.

GRIZZLE, HUNCAMUNCA.

GRIZZLE. Where has my Huncamunca been? See here. The licence in my hand!
HUNCAMUNCA. Alas! Tom Thumb.
GRIZZLE. Why dost thou mention him?
HUNCAMUNCA. Ah me! Tom Thumb.
GRIZZLE. What means my lovely Huncamunca?
HUNCAMUNCA. Hum!
GRIZZLE. Oh! speak.
HUNCAMUNCA. Hum!
GRIZZLE. Ha, your every word is hum:
You force me still to answer you, Tom Thumb.[93]
Tom Thumb, I'm on the rack, I'm in a flame,
Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb, Tom Thumb, you love the name; [94]
So pleasing is that sound, that were you dumb
You still would find a voice to cry, Tom Thumb.

[91] Mr. Dryden hath imitated this in All for Love.
[92] This Miltonic style abounds in the New Sophonisba:

"And on her ample brow
Sat majesty."

[93] "Your every answer still so ends in that,
You force me still to answer you, Morat"—*Aurengzebe.*

[94] "Morat, Morat, Morat, you love the name."—*Aurengzebe.*

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! be not hasty to proclaim my doom,
My ample heart for more than one has room;
A maid, like me, Heaven formed at least for two,
I married him, and now I'll marry you.[95]

GRIZZLE. Ha! dost thou own thy falsehood to my face?
Think'st thou that I will share thy husband's place?
Since to that office one cannot suffice,
And since you scorn to dine one single dish on,
Go, get your husband put into commission.
Commissioners to discharge, (ye gods) it fine is,
The duty of a husband to your highness;
Yet think not long I will my rival bear,
Or unrevenged the slightest willow wear;
The gloomy, brooding tempest, now confined
Within the hollow caverns of my mind,
In dreadful whirl shall roll along the coasts,
Shall thin the land of all the men it boasts,
And cram up every chink of hell with ghosts.[96]

[95] "Here is a sentiment for the virtuous Huncamunca," (says Mr. D——s), and yet, with the leave of this great man, the virtuous Panthea in Cyrus hath an heart every whit as ample:

"For two I must confess are gods to me,
Which is my Abradates first, and thee."—*Cyrus the Great.*

Nor is the lady in Love Triumphant more reserved, though not so intelligible;

"I am so divided,
That I grieve most for both, and love both most."

[96] A ridiculous supposition to any one who considers the great and extensive largeness of hell, says a commentator; but not so to those who consider the great expansion of immaterial substance. Mr. Banks makes one soul to be so expanded, that heaven could not contain it:

"The heavens are all too narrow for her soul."
Virtue Betrayed.

So have I seen, in some dark winter's day,[97]
A sudden storm rush down the sky's highway,
Sweep through the streets with terrible ding dong,
Gush through the spouts, and wash whole clouds along.
The crowded shops, the thronging vermin skreen,
Together cram the dirty and the clean,
And not one shoe-boy in the street is seen.

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh, fatal rashness! should his fury slay
My hapless bridegroom on his wedding-day;
I, who this morn of two chose which to wed,
May go again this night alone to bed.
So have I seen some wild unsettled fool,
Who had her choice of this and that joint-stool;
To give the preference to either loth,
And fondly coveting to sit on both:
While the two stools her sitting-part confound,
Between 'em both fall squat upon the ground.[98]

The Persian Princess hath a passage not unlike the Author of this:

> "We will send such shoals of murdered slaves,
> Shall glut hell's empty regions."

This threatens to fill hell even though it was empty; Lord Grizzle, only to fill up the chinks, supposing the rest already full.

[97] Mr. Addison is generally thought to have had this simile in his eye when he wrote that beautiful one at the end of the third act of his Cato.

[98] This beautiful simile is founded on a proverb which does honour to the English language:

> "Between two stools the breech falls to the ground."

I am not so well pleased with any written remains of the ancients, as with those little aphorisms which verbal tradition hath delivered down to us, under the title of Proverbs. It were to be wished that instead of filling their pages with the fabulous theology of the pagans, our modern poets would think it worth their while to enrich their works with the proverbial sayings of their ancestors. Mr. Dryden hath chronicled one in heroic:

> "Two ifs scarce make one possibility."—*Conquest of Granada.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—KING ARTHUR'S *Palace.*

GHOST. [*Solus.*] Hail! ye black horrors of midnight's midmoon! [99]
Ye fairies, goblins, bats and screech-owls, hail!
And oh! ye mortal watchmen, whose hoarse throats
Th' immortal ghosts' dread croakings counterfeit,

My Lord Bacon is of opinion that whatever is known of arts and sciences might be proved to have lurked in the Proverbs of Solomon. I am of the same opinion in relation to those above mentioned, at least, I am confident that a more perfect system of ethics, as well as economy, might be compiled out of them than is at present extant, either in the works of the ancient philosophers, or those more valuable, as more voluminous ones of the modern divines.

[99] Of all the particulars in which the modern stage falls short of the ancient, there is none so much to be lamented as the great scarcity of ghosts. Whence this proceeds, I will not presume to determine. Some are of opinion, that the moderns are unequal to that sublime language which a ghost ought to speak. One says ludicrously, that ghosts are out of fashion; another, that they are properer for comedy; forgetting, I suppose, that Aristotle hath told us, that a ghost is the soul of tragedy; for so I render the ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος τῆς τραγωδίας, which M. Dacier, amongst others, hath mistaken; I suppose misled by not understanding the Fabula of the Latins, which signifies a Ghost as well as a Fable.

—"Te premet nox, fabulæque manes."—*Horace.*

Of all the ghosts that have ever appeared on the stage, a very learned and judicious foreign critic gives the preference to this of our Author. These are his words speaking of this tragedy:

——"Nec quidquam in illa admirabilius quam phasma quoddam horrendum, quod omnibus aliis spectris, quibuscum scatet Angelorum tragœdia, longe (pace D—ysii V. Doctiss. dixerim) prætulerim."

All hail——Ye dancing phantoms, who by day,
Are some condemned to fast, some feast in fire;
Now play in churchyards, skipping o'er the graves,
To the loud music of the silent bell,
All hail![100]

SCENE II.

KING *and* GHOST.

KING. What noise is this—What villain dares,
At this dread hour, with feet and voice profane,
Disturb our royal walls?
GHOST. One who defies
The empty power to hurt him; one who dares
Walk in thy bedchamber.[101]
KING. Presumptuous slave!
Thou diest.
GHOST. Threaten others with that word,
I am a ghost, and am already dead.[102]

[100] We have already given instances of this figure.
[101] Almanzor reasons in the same manner:

"A ghost I'll be,
And from a ghost, you know, no place is free."
Conquest of Granada.

[102] "The man who writ this wretched pun," says Mr. D——, "would have picked your pocket:" which he proceeds to show not only bad in itself, but doubly so on so solemn an occasion. And yet in that excellent play of Liberty Asserted we find something very much resembling a pun in the mouth of a mistress, who is parting with a lover she is fond of:

"UL. Oh, mortal woe! one kiss and then farewell.

"IRENE. The gods have given to others to fare well.
O miserably must Irene fare."

KING. Ye stars! 'tis well; were thy last hour to come,
This moment had been it; yet by thy shroud
I'll pull thee backward, squeeze thee to a bladder,
Till thou dost groan thy nothingness away.[103]
Thou fly'st! 'Tis well. [*Ghost retires.*
I thought what was the courage of a ghost![104]
Yet dare not, on thy life—Why say I that,
Since life thou hast not?—Dare not walk again
Within these walls, on pain of the Red Sea.
For, if henceforth I ever find thee here,
As sure, sure as a gun, I'll have thee laid——
GHOST. Were the Red Sea a sea of Holland's gin,
The liquor (when alive) whose very smell
I did detest, did loath—yet, for the sake
Of Thomas Thumb, I would be laid therein.
KING. Ha! said you?
GHOST. Yes, my liege, I said Tom Thumb,
Whose father's ghost I am—once not unknown
To mighty Arthur. But, I see, 'tis true,

Agamemnon, in The Victim, is full as facetious on the most solemn occasion, that of sacrificing his daughter:

> "Yes, daughter, yes; you will assist the priest;
> Yes, you must offer up your—vows for Greece."

[103] "I'll pull thee backwards by thy shroud to light,
Or else I'll squeeze thee, like a bladder, there,
And make thee groan thyself away to air."
—*Conquest of Granada.*

"Snatch me, ye gods, this moment into nothing."
—*Cyrus the Great.*

[104] "So, art thou gone? Thou canst no conquest boast.
I thought what was the courage of a ghost."
—*Conquest of Granada.*

King Arthur seems to be as brave a fellow as Almanzor, who says most heroically,

> "——In spite of ghosts I'll on."

The dearest friend, when dead, we all forget.
KING. 'Tis he, it is the honest gaffer Thumb.
Oh! let me press thee in my eager arms,
Thou best of ghosts! thou something more than ghost!
GHOST. Would I were something more, that we again
Might feel each other in the warm embrace.
But now I have th' advantage of my king,
For I feel thee, whilst thou dost not feel me.[105]
KING. But say, thou dearest air,[106] oh! say what dread
Important business sends thee back to earth?
GHOST. Oh! then prepare to hear——which but to hear
Is full enough to send thy spirit hence.
Thy subjects up in arms, by Grizzle led,
Will, ere the rosy-fingered morn shall ope
The shutters of the sky, before the gate
Of this thy royal palace, swarming spread:
So have I seen the bees in clusters swarm,
So have I seen the stars in frosty nights,
So have I seen the sand in windy days,
So have I seen the ghosts on Pluto's shore,
So have I seen the flowers in spring arise,
So have I seen the leaves in autumn fall,
So have I seen the fruits in summer smile,
So have I seen the snow in winter frown.[107]
KING. D——n all thou hast seen!——dost thou beneath
the shape
Of gaffer Thumb, come hither to abuse me
With similes to keep me on the rack?
Hence—or, by all the torments of thy hell,

[105] The ghost of Lausaria in Cyrus, is a plain copy of this, and is therefore worth reading:

"Ah, Cyrus!
Thou mayst as well grasp water, or fleet air,
As think of touching my immortal shade."—*Cyrus the Great.*

[106] "Thou better part of heavenly air."—*Conquest of Granada.*

[107] "A string of similes (says one) proper to be hung up in the cabinet of a prince."

I'll run thee through the body, though thou 'st none.[108]
GHOST. Arthur, beware! I must this moment hence,
Not frighted by your voice, but by the cocks!
Arthur beware, beware, beware, beware!
Strive to avert thy yet impending fate;
For if thou 'rt killed to-day,
To-morrow all thy care will come too late.

SCENE III.

KING. [*Solus.*] Oh! stay, and leave me not uncertain thus!
And whilst thou tellest me what's like my fate,
Oh! teach me how I may avert it too!
Curst be the man who first a simile made!
Curst every bard who writes!——So have I seen
Those whose comparisons are just and true,
And those who liken things not like at all.
The devil is happy that the whole creation
Can furnish out no simile to his fortune.

SCENE IV.

KING, QUEEN.

QUEEN. What is the cause, my Arthur, that you steal
Thus silently from Dollallolla's breast?

[108] This passage hath been understood several different ways by the commentators. For my part, I find it difficult to understand it at all. Mr. Dryden says,

> "I have heard something how two bodies meet,
> But how two souls join I know not."

So that till the body of a spirit be better understood, it will be difficult to understand how it is possible to run him through it.

Why dost thou leave me in the dark alone,[109]
When well thou know'st I am afraid of sprites?
KING. Oh, Dollallolla! do not blame my love!
I hoped the fumes of last night's punch had laid
Thy lovely eyelids fast.—But, oh! I find
There is no power in drams to quiet wives;
Each morn, as the returning sun, they wake,
And shine upon their husbands.
QUEEN. Think, oh think!
What a surprise it must be to the sun,
Rising, to find the vanished world away.
What less can be the wretched wife's surprise
When, stretching out her arms to hold thee fast,
She found her useless bolster in her arms!
Think, think on that—Oh! think, think well on that[110]
I do remember also to have read
In Dryden's Ovid's Metamorphosis,[111]
That Jove in form inanimate did lie
With beauteous Danaë: and trust me, love,
I feared the bolster might have been a Jove.[112]
KING. Come to my arms, most virtuous of thy sex;
Oh, Dollallolla! were all wives like thee,
So many husbands never had worn horns.
Should Huncamunca of thy worth partake,
Tom Thumb indeed were blest—Oh fatal name!
For didst thou know one quarter what I know,
Then wouldst thou know—Alas! what thou wouldst know!

[109] Cydaria is of the same fearful temper with Dollallolla.

"I never durst in darkness be alone."—*Indian Emperor.*

[110] "Think well of this, think that, think every way."—*Sophonisba.*

[111] The quotations are more usual in the comic than in the tragic writers.

[112] "This distress (says Mr. D——) I must allow to be extremely beautiful, and tends to heighten the virtuous character of Dollallolla, who is so exceeding delicate, that she is in the highest apprehension from the inanimate embrace of a bolster. An example worthy of imitation for all our writers of tragedy."

QUEEN. What can I gather hence? Why dost thou speak
Like men who carry raree-shows about?
"Now you shall see, gentlemen, what you shall see."
O tell me more, or thou hast told too much.

SCENE V.

KING, QUEEN, NOODLE.

NOODLE. Long life attend your majesties serene,
Great Arthur, king, and Dollallolla, queen!
Lord Grizzle, with a bold rebellious crowd,
Advances to the palace, threat'ning loud,
Unless the princess be delivered straight
And the victorious Thumb, without his pate,
They are resolved to batter down the gate.

SCENE VI.

KING, QUEEN, HUNCAMUNCA, NOODLE.

KING. See where the princess comes! Where is Tom Thumb?

HUNCAMUNCA. Oh! sir, about an hour and a half ago
He sallied out t' encounter with the foe,
And swore, unless his fate had him misled,
From Grizzle's shoulders to cut off his head,
And serve 't up with your chocolate in bed.

KING. 'Tis well, I found one devil told us both.
Come Dollallolla, Huncamunca come,
Within we'll wait for the victorious Thumb;
In peace and safety we secure may stay,
While to his arm we trust the bloody fray;
Though men and giants should conspire with gods,

He is alone equal to all these odds.[113]

QUEEN. He is, indeed, a helmet to us all,
While he supports we need not fear to fall;[114]
His arm despatches all things to our wish,
And serves up every foe's head in a dish.
Void is the mistress of the house of care,
While the good cook presents the bill of fare;

[113] "Credat Judæus Apella,
Non ego"——

(says Mr. D——.)——For passing over the absurdity of being equal to odds, can we possibly suppose a little insignificant fellow ——I say again, a little insignificant fellow, able to vie with a strength which all the Samsons and Herculeses of antiquity would be unable to encounter?

I shall refer this incredulous critic to Mr. Dryden's defence of his Almanzor; and lest that should not satisfy him, I shall quote a few lines from the speech of a much braver fellow than Almanzor, Mr. Johnson's Achilles:

"Though human race rise in embattled hosts,
To force her from my arms—O! son of Atreus!
By that immortal power, whose deathless spirit
Informs this earth, I will oppose them all."—*Victim.*

[114] "I have heard of being supported by a staff (says Mr. D.) but never of being supported by a helmet." I believe he never heard of sailing with wings, which he may read in no less a poet than Mr. Dryden.

"Unless we borrow wings, and sail through air."
—*Love Triumphant.*

What will he say to a kneeling valley?

"I'll stand
Like a safe valley, that low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain."—*Injured Love.*

I am ashamed of so ignorant a carper, who doth not know that an epithet in tragedy is very often no other than an expletive. Do not we read in the New Sophonisba of "grinding chains, blue plagues, white occasions, and blue serenity"? Nay, it is not the adjective only, but sometimes half a sentence is put by way of expletive, as "Beauty pointed high with spirit," in the same play ——and, "In the lap of blessing to be most curst," in the Revenge.

Whether the cod, that northern king of fish,
Or duck, or goose, or pig, adorn the dish,
No fears the number of her guests afford,
But at her hour she sees the dinner on the board.

SCENE VII.—*A Plain.*

LORD GRIZZLE, FOODLE, *and* REBELS.

GRIZZLE. Thus far our arms with victory are crowned;
For though we have not fought, yet we have found
No enemy to fight withal.[115]
FOODLE. Yet I,
Methinks, would willingly avoid this day,
This first of April, to engage our foes.[116]
GRIZZLE. This day, of all the days of the year, I'd choose,
For on this day my grandmother was born.
Gods! I will make Tom Thumb an April-fool;
Will teach his wit an errand it ne'er knew,
And send it post to the Elysian shades.[117]
FOODLE. I'm glad to find our army is so stout,
Nor does it move my wonder less than joy.
GRIZZLE. What friends we have, and how we came so strong,
I'll softly tell you as we march along.[118]

[115] A victory like that of Almanzor:

"Almanzor is victorious without fight."—*Conquest of Granada.*

[116] "Well have we chose an happy day for fight.
For every man in course of time hath found,
Some days are lucky, some unfortunate."—*King Arthur.*

[117] We read of such another in Lee:

"Teach his rude wit a flight she never made,
And send her post to the Elysian shade."—*Gloriana.*

[118] These lines are copied verbatim in the Indian Emperor.

SCENE VIII.—*Thunder and Lightning.*

TOM THUMB, GLUMDALCA, *cum suis.*

TOM THUMB. Oh, Noodle! hast thou seen a day like this?
The unborn thunder rumbles o'er our heads,[119]
As if the gods meant to unhinge the world,
And heaven and earth in wild confusion hurl;
Yet will I boldly tread the tott'ring ball.[120]

MERLIN. Tom Thumb!

TOM THUMB. What voice is this I hear?

MERLIN. Tom Thumb!

TOM THUMB. Again it calls.

MERLIN. Tom Thumb!

GLUMDALCA. It calls again.

TOM THUMB. Appear whoe'er thou art, I fear thee not.

MERLIN. Thou hast no cause to fear, I am thy friend,
Merlin by name, a conjurer by trade,
And to my art thou dost thy being owe.

TOM THUMB. How!

MERLIN. Hear then the mystic getting of Tom Thumb:

His father was a ploughman plain,[121]
His mother milked the cow;
And yet the way to get a son
This couple knew not how;

[119] "Unborn thunder rolling in a cloud."—*Conquest of Granada.*

[120] "Were heaven and earth in wild confusion hurl'd.
Should the rash gods unhinge the rolling world,
Undaunted would I tread the tott'ring ball,
Crush'd, but unconquer'd in the dreadful fall."
—*Female Warrior.*

[121] See the History of TOM THUMB, page 2.

Until such time the good old man
To learned Merlin goes,
And there to him in great distress,
In secret manner shows,
How in his heart he wished to have
A child, in time to come,
To be his heir, though it may be
No bigger than his thumb:
Of which old Merlin was foretold,
That he his wish should have;
And so a son of stature small,
The charmer to him gave.

Thou 'st hear the past, look up, and see the future.

TOM THUMB. Lost in amazement's gulf, my senses sink;[122]
See there, Glumdalca, see another me![123]

GLUMDALCA. O sight of horror! see, you are devoured
By the expanded jaws of a red cow.

MERLIN. Let not these sights deter thy noble mind,
For lo! a sight more glorious courts thy eyes;[124]
See from afar a theatre arise;
There ages, yet unborn, shall tribute pay
To the heroic actions of this day:

[122] "Amazement swallows up my sense,
And in th' impetuous whirl of circling fate
Drinks down my reason."—*Persian Princess.*

[123] "———I have outfaced myself,
What! am I two? is there another me?"—*King Arthur.*

[124] The character of Merlin is wonderful throughout, but most so in this prophetic part. We find several of these prophecies in the tragic authors, who frequently take this opportunity to pay a compliment to their country and sometimes to their prince. None but our Author (who seems to have detested the least appearance of flattery) would have passed by such an opportunity of being a political prophet.

Then buskin Tragedy at length shall choose
Thy name the best supporter of her muse.
TOM THUMB. Enough, let every warlike music sound;
We fall contented, if we fall renowned.

SCENE IX.

LORD GRIZZLE, FOODLE, REBELS, *on one side.* TOM THUMB, GLUMDALCA, *on the other.*

FOODLE. At length the enemy advances nigh,
I hear them with my ear, and see them with my eye.[125]
GRIZZLE. Draw all your swords: for liberty we fight;
And liberty the mustard is of life.[126]
TOM THUMB. Are you the man, whom men famed Grizzle name?
GRIZZLE. Are you the much more famed Tom Thumb?[127]
TOM THUMB. The same.
GRIZZLE. Come on, our worth upon ourselves we'll prove;
For liberty I fight.

[125] "I saw the villain Myron, with these eyes I saw him."—*Busiris.*

In both which places it is intimated, that it is sometimes possible to see with other eyes than your own.

[126] "This mustard (says Mr. D——) is enough to turn one's stomach: I would be glad to know what idea the Author had in his head when he wrote it." This will be, I believe, best explained by a line of Mr. Dennis:

"And gave him liberty, the salt of life."—*Liberty Asserted.*

The understanding that can digest the one will not rise at the other.

[127] "HAN. Are you the chief, whom men famed Scipio call?
SCIP. Are you the much more famous Hannibal?"
—*Hannibal.*

TOM THUMB. And I for love.

[*A bloody engagement between the two armies here; drums beating, trumpets sounding, thunder and lightning.—They fight off and on several times. Some fall.* Grizzle *and* Glumdalca *remain.*

GLUMDALCA. Turn, coward, turn, nor from a woman fly.

GRIZZLE. Away—thou art too ignoble for my arm.

GLUMDALCA. Have at thy heart!

GRIZZLE. Nay, then I thrust at thine.

GLUMDALCA. You push too well; you've run me through the guts,
And I am dead.

GRIZZLE. Then there's an end of one.

TOM THUMB. When thou art dead, then there's an end of two,
Villain.[128]

GRIZZLE. Tom Thumb!

TOM THUMB. Rebel!

GRIZZLE. Tom Thumb!

TOM THUMB. Hell!

GRIZZLE. Huncamunca!

TOM THUMB. Thou hast it there.

GRIZZLE. Too sure I feel it.

TOM THUMB. To hell then, like a rebel as you are,
And give my service to the rebels there.

GRIZZLE. Triumph not, Thumb, nor think thou shalt enjoy
Thy Huncamunca undisturbed; I'll send

[128] Dr. Young seems to have copied this engagement in his Busiris:

"MYR. Villain!
MEM. Myron!
MYR. Rebel!
MEM. Myron!
MYR. Hell!
MEM. Mandane!"

My ghost to fetch her to the other world;[129]
It shall but bait at heaven, and then return.[130]
But ha! I feel death rumbling in my brains,[131]
Some kinder sprite knocks softly at my soul
And gently whispers it to haste away.[132]
I come, I come, most willingly I come.
So when some city wife, for country air,[133]
To Hampstead or to Highgate does repair;
Her, to make haste, her husband does implore,
And cries, "My dear, the coach is at the door."
With equal wish, desirous to be gone,
She gets into the coach, and then she cries—"Drive on!"

TOM THUMB. With those last words he vomited his soul,[134]
Which like whipt cream,[135] the devil will swallow down.

[129] This last speech of my Lord Grizzle hath been of great service to our poets:

"———I'll hold it fast
As life, and when life's gone I'll hold this last;
And if thou tak'st it from me when I'm slain,
I'll send my ghost and fetch it back again."
Conquest of Granada.

[130] "My soul should with such speed obey,
It should not bait at heaven to stop its way."

Lee seems to have had this last in his eye:

"'Twas not my purpose, sir, to tarry there,
I would but go to heaven to take the air."—*Gloriana.*

[131] "A rising vapour rumbling in my brains."—*Cleomenes.*

[132] "Some kind sprite knocks softly at my soul,
To tell me fate's at hand."

[133] Mr. Dryden seems to have had this simile in his eye, when he says,

"My soul is packing up, and just on wing."
Conquest of Granada.

[134] "And in a purple vomit poured his soul."—*Cleomenes.*

[135] "The devil swallows vulgar souls,
Like whipt cream."—*Sebastian.*

Bear off the body, and cut off the head,
Which I will to the king in triumph lug.
Rebellion's dead, and now I'll go to breakfast.

SCENE X.

KING, QUEEN, HUNCAMUNCA, *and* COURTIERS.

KING. Open the prisons, set the wretched free,
And bid our treasurer disburse six pounds
To pay their debts.——Let no one weep to-day.
Come, Dollallolla; curse that odious name!
It is so long it asks an hour to speak it.
By heavens! I'll change it into Doll, or Loll,
Or any other civil monosyllable
That will not tire my tongue.[126]—Come, sit thee down
Here seated let us view the dancers' sports;
Bid 'em advance. This is the wedding-day
Of Princess Huncamunca and Tom Thumb;
Tom Thumb! who wins two victories to-day [127]
And this way marches, bearing Grizzle' dead.

A dance here.

NOODLE. Oh! monstrous, dreadful, terrible, Oh! oh!
Deef be my ears, for ever blind my eyes;

[126] "How could I curse my name of Ptolemy!
It is so long it asks an hour to write it.
By heaven! I'll change it into Jove or Mars!
Or any other civil monosyllable
That will not tire my hand."—*Cleomenes.*

[127] Here is a visible conjunction of two days in one, by which our Author may have either intended an emblem of a wedding, or to insinuate, that men in the honeymoon are apt to imagine time shorter than it is. It brings into my mind a passage in the comedy called The Coffee-House Politician:

"We will celebrate this day at my house to-morrow."

Dumb be my tongue! feet lame! all senses lost!
Howl wolves, grunt bears, hiss snakes, shriek all ye ghosts![128]

KING. What does this blockhead mean?

NOODLE. I mean, my liege,
Only to grace my tale with decent horror:[129]
Whilst from my garret, twice two stories high,
I looked abroad into the streets below;
I saw Tom Thumb attended by the mob,
Twice twenty shoe-boys, twice two dozen links,
Chairmen and porters, hackney-coachmen, whores;
Aloft he bore the grizly head of Grizzle;
When of a sudden through the streets there came
A cow, of larger than the usual size,
And in a moment——guess, Oh! guess the rest!
And in a moment swallowed up Tom Thumb.

KING. Shut up again the prisoners, bid my treasurer
Not give three farthings out—hang all the culprits,
Guilty or not——no matter——Ravish virgins,
Go bid the schoolmasters whip all their boys!
Let lawyers, parsons, and physicians loose,
To rob, impose on, and to kill the world.

NOODLE. Her majesty the queen is in a swoon.

QUEEN. Not so much in a swoon, but I have still
Strength to reward the messenger of ill news.

[*Kills* Noodle.

NOODLE. Oh! I am slain.

CLEORA. My lover's killed, I will revenge him so.

[*Kills the* Queen.

HUNCAMUNCA. My mamma killed! vile murderess, beware.

[*Kills* Cleora.

DOODLE. This for an old grudge to thy heart.

[*Kills* Huncamunca.

[128] These beautiful phrases are all to be found in one single speech of King Arthur; or, The British Worthy.

[129] "I was but teaching him to grace his tale
With decent horror."—*Cleomenes.*

MUSTACHA. And this
I drive to thine, Oh Doodle! for a new one.
[*Kills* Doodle.

KING. Ha! murderess vile, take that.
[*Kills* Mustacha.
And take thou this.[140] [*Kills himself, and falls.*
So when the child whom nurse from danger guards,
Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards,

[140] We may say with Dryden,

> "Death did at length so many slain forget,
> And left the tale, and took them by the great."

I know of no tragedy which comes nearer to this charming and bloody catastrophe than Cleomenes, where the curtain covers five principal characters dead on the stage. These lines, too,

> "I asked no questions then, of who killed who?
> The bodies tell the story as they lie"—

seem to have belonged more properly to this scene of our Author.—Nor can I help imagining they were originally his. The Rival Ladies too seem beholden to this scene.

> "We're now a chain of lovers linked in death;
> Julia goes first, Gonsalvo hangs on her,
> And Angelina hangs upon Gonsalvo,
> As I on Angelina."

No scene, I believe, ever received greater honours than this. It was applauded by several encores, a word very unusual in tragedy. —And it was very difficult for the actors to escape without a second slaughter. This I take to be a lively assurance of that fierce spirit of liberty which remains among us, and which Mr. Dryden, in his essay on Dramatic Poetry, hath observed—"Whether custom (says he) hath so insinuated itself into our countrymen, or nature hath so formed them to fierceness, I know not; but they will scarcely suffer combats, and other objects of horror, to be taken from them."—And indeed I am for having them encouraged in this martial disposition: nor do I believe our victories over the French have been owing to any thing more than those bloody spectacles daily exhibited in our tragedies, of which the French stage is so entirely clear.

Kings, queens, and knaves, throw one another down,
Till the whole pack lies scattered and o'erthrown;
So all our pack upon the floor is cast,
And all I boast is——that I fall the last. [*Dies.*

THE

Coffee-House *Politician*;

OR, THE

JUSTICE

Caught in his own TRAP.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

Theatre Royal in *Lincoln's Inn-Fields.*

Written by Mr. *FIELDING.*

LONDON:

Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in *Wild-Court* near *Lincolns-Inn Fields.*

MDCCXXX.

Price One Shilling and Six Pence.

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. MILWARD

In ancient Greece, the infant Muse's school,
Where vice first felt the pen of ridicule,
With honest freedom and impartial blows
The Muse attacked each vice as it arose:
No grandeur could the mighty villain screen
From the just satire of the comic scene:
No titles could the daring poet cool,
Nor save the great right honourable fool.
They spared not even the aggressor's name,
And public villainy felt public shame.

Long hath this generous method been disused,
For vice hath grown too great to be abused;
By power defended from the piercing dart,
It reigns, and triumphs in the lordly heart;
While beaus, and cits, and squires, our scenes afford,
Justice preserves the rogues who wield her sword;
All satire against her tribunal's quash'd,
Nor lash the bards, for fear of being lash'd.

But the heroic Muse, who sings to-night,
Through these neglected tracts attempts her flight.
Vice, clothed with power, she combats with her pen,
And, fearless, dares the lion in his den.

Then only reverence to power is due,
When public welfare is its only view:
But when the champions, whom the public arm
For their own good with power, attempt their harm,

He sure must meet the general applause,
Who 'gainst those traitors fights the public cause.

And while these scenes the conscious knave displease,
Who feels within the criminal he sees,
The uncorrupt and good must smile, to find
No mark for satire in his generous mind.

RAPE *upon* RAPE;

OR, THE

JUSTICE

Caught in his own TRAP.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

Theatre in the *Hay-Market.*

LONDON:

Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in *Wild-Court* near *Lincoln's-Inn Fields.*

MDCCXXX.

Price One Shilling and Six Pence.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

WORTHY	*Mr. Ogden.*
SQUEEZUM	*Mr. Hippisley.*
POLITIC	*Mr. Chapman.*
RAMBLE	*Mr. Walker.*
CONSTANT	*Mr. Milward.*
SOTMORE	*Mr. Hulett.*
DABBLE	*Mr. Ray.*
QUILL	*Mr. H. Bullock.*
STAFF	*Mr. Hall.*
POREE	*Mr. Maclean.*
FAITHFUL	*Mr. Houghton.*

WOMEN

HILARET	*Mrs. Younger.*
ISABELLA	*Mrs. Boheme.*
MRS. SQUEEZUM	*Mrs. Bullock.*
MRS. STAFF	*Mrs. Kilby.*
CLORIS	*Mrs. Stephens.*

Evidences, Watch, &c.

SCENE, LONDON

RAPE UPON RAPE;

OR,

THE JUSTICE CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in* POLITIC'S *House. A table spread with newspapers. Chairs.*

HILARET, CLORIS.

HILARET. Well, Cloris, this is a mad frolic. I am horribly frighted at the thoughts of throwing myself into the power of a young fellow.

CLORIS. It is natural to us to be frighted at first: I was in a little terror myself on my wedding-day, but it went all off before the next morning. A husband, like other bugbears, loses all his horror when we once know him thoroughly.

HILARET. But if he should not prove a good husband—

CLORIS. Then you must not prove a good wife——If he keep a mistress, do you keep a gallant; if he stay out with his friends at a tavern, do you be merry with your friends at home.

HILARET. You give fine advice indeed.

CLORIS. Upon my word, madam, it was such as I followed myself. I had a rogue of a husband that robbed me of all I had, and kept a mistress under my nose: but I was even with him; for it hath been ever my opinion, that a husband, like a

courtier, who is above doing the duties of his office, should keep a deputy.

HILARET. But suppose you had been in love with your husband?

CLORIS. Why so I was, madam, as long as he deserved it: but love, like fire, naturally goes out when it hath nothing to feed on.

HILARET. Well, if it be possible to be assured of a lover's sincerity, I think I may be assured of Constant: at least it is advisable to persuade myself of his truth whom I should love, though he wanted it:—Ah, Cloris! you may as easily remove a rock as a woman's passion——

CLORIS. And yet it is very often built on a sandy foundation.

HILARET. Love is the same, whatever be its object: we as often like men for imaginary as real perfections; we all look through a prismatic glass in love, and whatever beauties we have once fancied we never lose the opinion of—our amorous faith is as implicit as our religious.

CLORIS. If I have any judgment in mankind, and I am sure I have had some experience in them, your passion could have been no where better fixed: Captain Constant hath all the qualities any woman can desire. He hath youth, beauty, vigour, gallantry, constancy, and, as Mr. Cowley says, a long, &c.

SCENE II.

POLITIC, HILARET, CLORIS.

POLITIC. Ay, there it goes, tick tack, tick tack, like the pendulum of a clock. What mischief are you hatching, hey? ——It is impossible that two women should be together without producing mischief.

CLORIS. I always thought a man and woman the more likely to produce mischief: and yet I think them the properer company.

POLITIC. I suppose you will tell my daughter so too.

HILARET. Indeed, papa, she need not: for I was always of that opinion.

POLITIC. You was! but I shall prevent your wishes—

HILARET. You may be mistaken. [*Aside.*

POLITIC. I do not believe the head of Cardinal Fleury can be more perplexed than mine is with this girl. To govern yourself is greater than to govern a kingdom, said an old philosopher: and to govern a woman is greater than to govern twenty kingdoms.

HILARET. I wish you would not perplex yourself with cardinals or kingdoms; I wish you would mind your own business instead of the public's; dear papa, don't give your self any more trouble about Don Carlos, unless you can get him for a son-in-law.

POLITIC. Not if I were a king. I will make you a little sensible who Don Carlos is——

HILARET. Nay, I do not understand one word of your politics.

POLITIC. I am sorry you do not—A newspaper would be a more profitable entertainment for you than a romance. You would find more in one half-sheet than in the grand Cyrus.

HILARET. More lies, very probably——You know I do read the home paragraphs in the Whitehall Evening Post: and that's the best of them.

POLITIC. If you would be informed in these matters, you must read all that come out: about forty every day, and some days fifty: and, of a Saturday, about fourscore. Would you continue in such a course but one twelvemonth, I do not question but you might know as much of politics as—any man that comes to our coffee-house. And I had rather see you a politician than a woman of quality.

HILARET. If I may speak freely, it would have been better for me that you had been less a politician.

POLITIC. You are deceived, very much deceived; but some fool hath put this into your head. You may live to see me one of the greatest men in England. Did I not say at the

siege of Gibraltar that, within one three years, we should see whether we should have peace or no. And yet I am an Ignoramus; I know nothing, I warrant you; I had better have continued a merchant, no doubt: but then what had become of my projects? Where had been all those twenty different schemes which I have now ready to lay before the parliament, greatly for my own honour, and the interest of my country? Harkye, I have contrived a method to pay off the debts of the nation, without a penny of money.

HILARET. And you will not get a penny by it, I dare swear.

POLITIC. No, no, no, certainly: though I would not take twenty thousand pounds for the advantage which will arise to me from it. It hath lain these three years in a friend's hands of mine of the House of Commons; who assured me, not many days ago, that it should be taken shortly into consideration, though he believed it could not be this session.

HILARET. Nor this age, I am confident. [*Aside.*

POLITIC. And how do you think it is to be compassed? why, by procuring a machine to carry ships by land about a hundred miles: and so prosecute the East India trade through the Mediterranean.

HILARET. I wish you success, sir: but I must take my leave of you, for it grows very late: so good night, papa.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

POLITIC. [*Solus.*] I cannot rest for these preparations of the Turks: what can be their design?——It must be against the emperor.——Ay, ay, we shall have another campaign in Hungary. I wish we may feel no other effect from them.——Should the Turkish galleys once find a passage through the Straits, who can tell the consequence? I hope I shall not live to see that day.

SCENE IV.

POLITIC, DABBLE.

DABBLE. We are all undone, neighbour Politic! all blown up! all ruined!

POLITIC. Protect us——what is the matter? No news of the Turks, I hope!

DABBLE. An express is arrived with an account of the Dauphin's death.

POLITIC. Worse and worse—This is a finishing stroke, indeed! Mr. Dabble, I take this visit exceeding kind—pray be pleased to sit: we must confabulate on this important accident.—Pray light your pipe:—I wish this may not retard the introduction of Don Carlos into Italy.

DABBLE. I wish it may.

POLITIC. How!

DABBLE. I wish Don Carlos do not prove a more formidable power than is imagined.

POLITIC. Don Carlos a formidable power, Mr. Dabble?

DABBLE. I wish we do not find him so.

POLITIC. Sir, I look on Don Carlos to be an errant blank in the affairs of Europe——and let me observe to you, the Turks give much greater uneasiness than Don Carlos can; what the design of their preparations can be is difficult to determine.—This I know, that I know nothing of the matter.

DABBLE. I think we have no need to travel so far for apprehensions, when danger is so near us: the prospect of affairs in the West is so black, that I see no reason to regard the East: the monstrous power which Don Carlos may be possessed of by the death of the Dauphin——

POLITIC. Rather, the monstrous power which the emperor may be possessed of.

DABBLE. The emperor—ah! } [*Both shake their heads at*
POLITIC. Don Carlos truly! } *one another.*

DABBLE. I would fain ask one question, Mr. Politic. Pray, how large do you take Tuscany to be?——

POLITIC. How large do I take Tuscany to be——let me see———Tuscany, ay; how large do I take it to be.——hum——Faithful!——bring some more tobacco. How large do I take it to be——why, truly, I take it to be about as large as the kingdom of France——or something larger.——

DABBLE. As large as the kingdom of France——you might as well compare this tobacco pipe to a cannon. Why, Tuscany, sir, is only a town, a garrison to be admitted into Tuscany; that is, into the town of Tuscany——

POLITIC. Sir, I will convince you of your error.——Here, Faithful, bring a map of Europe hither.——

DABBLE. I did not think, Mr. Politic, you had been so ignorant in geography.

POLITIC. I believe I know as much as you, or any one, of it.

SCENE V.

POLITIC, DABBLE, FAITHFUL.

FAITHFUL. Sir, sir, your daughter is gone out of the house, no one knows whither.

POLITIC. And give me leave to tell you, sir, I wish your own ignorance in public affairs doth not appear to our cost.

DABBLE. Sir, I wish you would send for the map.

POLITIC. Map me no maps, sir, my head is a map, a map of the whole world.——

FAITHFUL. Sir, your daughter——

DABBLE. If your head be a map, it is a very erroneous one.

POLITIC. Sir, I would not have called Tuscany a town in a coffee-house, to have been master of it.

DABBLE. Nor I have compared it to France, to have been king of both.

SCENE VI.

POLITIC, DABBLE, FAITHFUL, PORER.

PORER. Great news, gentlemen, all's safe again.

POLITIC. More deaths?

PORER. An express is arrived with a certain account of the Dauphin's being in good health.

DABBLE. This is good news indeed.

POLITIC. Is there a certain confirmation?

PORER. Very certain—I came this moment from the Secretary's office.

POLITIC. Dear Mr. Porer, you are the welcomest man alive——This news makes me the happiest creature living.

FAITHFUL. I wish, sir, my news may not prevent it. Your daughter, sir, Miss Hilaret, is gone out of the house, and no one knows whither.

POLITIC. My daughter gone! that is some allay to my happiness, I confess: but the loss of twenty daughters would not balance the recovery of the Dauphin.—However, gentlemen, you will excuse me, I must go inquire into this affair.

DABBLE. Be not concerned at any thing, after what you have heard: let the private give way to the public ever.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*The Street.*

SOTMORE, RAMBLE.

SOTMORE. Why, thou wilt not leave us yet, and sneak away to some nasty little whore? A pox confound them, they have spoiled so many of my companions, and forced me to bed sober at three o'clock in the morning so often—that if the whole sex were going to the devil, I would drink a bumper to their good journey.

RAMBLE. And I would go thither along with them. The

dear charming creatures! Woman! It is the best word that ever was invented. There's music, there's magic in it. Mark Antony knew well to lay out his money, and when he gave the world for a woman——he bought a lumping pennyworth.

SOTMORE. If he had given it for a hogshead of good claret, I would have commended the purchase more.

RAMBLE. Wine is only the prologue to love: it only serves to raise our expectations. The bottle is but a passport to the bed of pleasure. Brutes drink to quench their appetites—— but lovers to inflame them.

SOTMORE. 'Tis pity the generous liquor should be used to no better a purpose.

RAMBLE. It is the noblest use of the grape, and the greatest glory of Bacchus is to be page to Venus.

SOTMORE. Before I go into a tavern again with a man who will sneak away after the first bottle, may I be cursed with the odious sight of a pint as long as I live: or become member of a city club, where men drink out of thimbles, that the fancy may be heightened by the wine, about the same time that the understanding is improved by the conversation: I'll sooner drink coffee with a politician, tea with a fine lady, or 'rack punch with a fine gentleman, than thus be made a whetstone of, to sharpen my friends' inclinations, that some little strumpet may enjoy the benefit of that good humour which I have raised.

RAMBLE. Why, thou art as ill-natured and as angry as a woman would be who was disappointed in the last moment, when her expectations were at the highest.

SOTMORE. And have I not the same cause?

RAMBLE. Truly, honest Nol, when a man's reason begins to stagger I think him the properest company for the women: one bottle more, and I had been fit for no company at all.

SOTMORE. Then thou hadst been carried off with glory.— An honest fellow should no more quit the tavern while he can stand than a soldier should the field; but you fine gentlemen are for preserving yourselves safe from both for the benefit of the ladies.——'Sdeath! I'll use you with the same

scorn that a soldier would a coward: so, sir, when I meêt you next, be not surprised if I walk on the other side the way.

RAMBLE. Nay, pr'ythee, dear Silenus, be not so enraged; I'll but take one refreshing turn, and come back to the tavern to thee. Burgundy shall be the word, and I will fight under thy command till I drop.

SOTMORE. Now thou art an honest fellow—and thou shalt toast whomsoever thou pleasest—We'll bumper up her health, till thou dost enjoy her in imagination. To a warm imagination there is no bawd like a bottle. It shall throw into your arms the soberest prude or wildest coquette in town; thou shalt rifle her charms in spite of her art. Nay, thou shalt increase her charms more than her art: and, when thou art surfeited with the luscious pleasure, wake coolly the next morning without any wife by your side, or any fear of children.

RAMBLE. What a luscious picture hast thou drawn!

SOTMORE. And thou shalt have it, boy! Thou shalt triumph over her virtue, if she be a woman of quality—or raise her blushes, if she be a common strumpet. I'll go order a new recruit upon the table, and expect you with impatience. —"Fill every glass." [*Sings.*] [*Exit* Sotmore.

SCENE VIII.

RAMBLE. [*Solus.*] Sure this fellow's whole sensation lies in his throat: for he is never pleased but when he is swallowing: and yet the hogshead will be as soon drunk with the liquor it contains as he. I wish it had no other effect upon me. Pox of my paper skull! I have no sooner buried the wine in my belly than its spirit rises in my head.——I am in a very proper humour for a frolic; if my good genius, and her evil one, would but send some lovely female in my way ——Ha! the devil hath heard my prayers.

SCENE IX.

RAMBLE, HILARET.

HILARET. Was ever any thing so unfortunate! to lose this wench in the scuffle, and not know a step of the way—— What shall I do?

RAMBLE. By all my love of glory, an adventure.

HILARET. Ha! who's that? who are you, sir?

RAMBLE. A cavalier, madam, a knight-errant rambling about the world in quest of adventures. To plunder widows and ravish virgins; to lessen the number of bullies, and increase that of cuckolds, are the obligations of my profession.

HILARET. I wish you all the success so worthy an adventurer deserves. [*Going.*

RAMBLE. But hold, madam, I am but just sallied, and you are the first adventure I have met with.

[*Takes hold of her.*

HILARET. Let me go, I beseech you, sir; I will have nothing to say to any of your profession.

RAMBLE. That's unkind, madam: for, as I take it, our professions are pretty near allied, and, like priest and nun, we are proper company for one another.

HILARET. My profession, sir!

RAMBLE. Yes, madam, I believe I am no stranger to the honourable rules of your order. Nay, 'tis probable I may know your abbess too; for, though I have not been in town a week, I am acquainted with half a dozen.

HILARET. Nothing but your drink, sir, and ignorance of my quality, could excuse this rudeness.

RAMBLE. Whu——[*whistles*]. Ignorance of your quality! (The daughter of some person of rank, I warrant her.) [*Aside.*] Look'ee my dear, I shall not trouble myself with your quality: It is equal to me whether your father rode in a coach and six, or drove it.——I have had as much joy in

the arms of an honest boatswain's wife, as with a relation of the Great Mogul.

HILARET. You look, sir, so much like a gentleman, that I am persuaded this usage proceeds only from your mistaking me. I own it looks a little odd for a woman of virtue to be found alone in the street, at this hour——

RAMBLE. Yes, it does look a little odd indeed. [*Aside.*

HILARET. But when you know my story, I am confident you will assist me, rather than otherwise. I have this very night escaped with my maid from my father's house; and, as I was going to put myself into the hands of my lover, a scuffle happening in the street, and both running away in a fright to avoid it, we unluckily separated from each other. ——Now, sir, I rely on the generosity of your temper to assist an unhappy woman; for which you shall not only have my thanks, but those of a very pretty fellow into the bargain.

RAMBLE. I am that very pretty fellow's very humble servant. But I find I am too much in love with you myself, to preserve you for another: had you proved what I at first took you for, I should have parted with you easily; but I read a coronet in your eyes; (she shall be her grace if she pleases, I had rather give her a title than money). [*Aside.*

HILARET. Nay, now you mistake me as widely as you did at first.

RAMBLE. Nay, by this frolic, madam, you must be either a woman of quality, or a woman of the town.——Your low, mean people, who govern themselves by rules, dare not attempt these noble flights of pleasure. Flights only to be reached by those who boldly soar above reputation.

HILARET. This is the maddest fellow. [*Aside.*

RAMBLE. So, my dear, whether you be of quality or no quality, you and I will go drink one bottle together at the next tavern.

HILARET. I have but one way to get rid of him. [*Aside.*

RAMBLE. Come, my dear angel. Oh! this dear soft hand.

HILARET. Could I but be assured that my virtue would be safe.

RAMBLE. No where safer. I'll give thee any thing in pawn for it—(but my watch). [*Aside.*

HILARET. And then my reputation——

RAMBLE. The night will take care of that—virtue and reputation! These whores have learnt a strange cant since I left England. [*Aside.*

HILARET. But will you love me always?

RAMBLE. Oh! for ever and ever, to be sure.

HILARET. But will you——too.

RAMBLE. Yes, I will——too.

HILARET. Will you promise to be civil?

RAMBLE. Oh! yes, yes; (I was afraid she would have asked me for money). [*Aside.*

HILARET. Well, then I will venture.—Go you to that corner tavern, I'll follow you.

RAMBLE. Excuse me, madam, I know my duty better—so, if you please, I'll follow you.

HILARET. I insist on your going first.

RAMBLE. And so you'll leave me in the lurch: I see you are frighted at the roughness of my dress, but, fore gad, I am an honest tar, and the devil take me if I bilk you.

HILARET. I don't understand you.

RAMBLE. Why, then, madam, here is a pound of as good tea as ever came out of the Indies; you understand that, I hope.

HILARET. I shall take no bribes, sir.

RAMBLE. Refuse the tea! I like you now indeed; for you cannot have been long upon the town, I'm sure. But I grow weary with impatience. If you are a modest woman, and insist on the ceremony of being carried, with all my heart.

HILARET. Nay, sir, do not proceed to rudeness.

RAMBLE. In short, my passion will be dallied with no longer. Do you consider I am just come on shore, that I have seen nothing but men and the clouds this half year, and a woman is as ravishing a sight to me as the returning sun to Greenland. I am none of your puisny beaus, that can look on a fine woman, like a surfeited man on an entertain-

ment. My stomach's sharp, and you are an ortolan; and, if I do not eat you up, may salt beef be my fare for ever!

[*Takes her in his arms.*

HILARET. I'll alarm the watch.

RAMBLE. You'll be better-natured than that. At least, to encounter danger is my profession; so have at you, my little Venus—if you don't consent, I'll ravish you.

HILARET. Help there! a rape, a rape!

RAMBLE. Hush, hush, you call too loud, people will think you are in earnest.

HILARET. Help!—a rape!

SCENE X.

RAMBLE, HILARET, STAFF, WATCH.

STAFF. That's he there, seize him.

RAMBLE. Stand off, ye scoundrels!

STAFF. Ay, sir, you should have stood off——Do you charge this man with a rape, madam?

HILARET. I am frighted out of my senses——

STAFF. A plain case!——The rape is sufficiently proved. ——What, was the devil in you, to ravish a woman in the street thus?

HILARET. Oh! dear Mr. Constable, all I desire is, that you would see me safe home.

STAFF. Never fear, madam, you shall not want evidence.

[*Aside to her.*

RAMBLE. (Nay, if I must lodge with these gentlemen, I am resolved to have your company, madam.) Mr. Constable, I charge that lady with threatening to swear a rape against me, and laying violent hands upon my person, whilst I was inoffensively walking along the street.

HILARET. How! villain!

RAMBLE. Ay, ay, madam, you shall be made a severe example of. The laws are come to a fine pass truly, when a sober gentleman can't walk the streets for women.

HILARET. For Heaven's sake, sir, don't believe him.

STAFF. Nay, madam, as we have but your bare affirmation on both sides, we cannot tell which way to incline our belief; that will be determined in the morning by your characters—I would not have you dejected, you shall not want a character. [*Aside to her.*

HILARET. This was the most unfortunate accident, sure, that ever befell a woman of virtue.

STAFF. If you are a woman of virtue, the gentleman will be hanged for attempting to rob you of it. If you are not a woman of virtue, why you will be whipped for accusing a gentleman of robbing you of what you had not to lose.

HILARET. Oh! this unfortunate fright——But, Mr. Constable, I am very willing that the gentleman should have his liberty, give me but mine?

STAFF. That request, madam, is a very corroborating circumstance against you.

RAMBLE. Guilt will ever discover itself.

STAFF. Bring them along.

1 WATCH. She looks like a modest woman, in my opinion.

RAMBLE. Confound all your modest women, I say,—a man can have nothing to do with a modest woman, but he must be married, or hanged for't. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—JUSTICE SQUEEZUM'S; *a table, pen, ink, paper, &c.*

SQUEEZUM, QUILL.

SQUEEZUM. Did Mother Bilkum refuse to pay my demands, say you?

QUILL. Yes, sir; she says she does not value your worship's protection of a farthing, for that she can bribe two

juries a year to acquit her in Hicks's Hall, for half the money which she hath paid you within these three months.

SQUEEZUM. Very fine; I shall show her that I understand something of juries, as well as herself. Quill, make a memorandum against Mother Bilkum's trial, that we may remember to have the panel No. 3; they are a set of good men and true, and hearken to no evidence but mine.

QUILL. Sir, Mr. Snap, the bailiff's follower, hath set up a shop, and is a freeholder. He hopes your worship will put him into a pannel on the first vacancy.

SQUEEZUM. Minute him down for No. 2. I think half of that pannel are bailiff's followers. Thank Heaven, the laws have not excluded those butchers.

QUILL. No, sir, the law forbids butchers to be jurymen, but does not forbid jurymen to be butchers.

SQUEEZUM. Quill, d'ye hear! Look out for some new recruits for the pannel No. 1. We shall have a swinging vacancy there the next sessions.—Truly, if we do not take some care to regulate the juries in the Old Bailey, we shall have no juries for Hicks's Hall.

QUILL. Very true, sir. But that pannel hath been more particularly unfortunate. I believe I remember it hanged, at least twice over.

SQUEEZUM. Ay, poor fellows! We must all take our chance, Quill. The man who would live in this world must not fear the next. The chance of peace is doubtful as that of war; and they who will make their fortunes at home, should entertain no more dread of the bench, than a soldier should of the field. We are all militant here; and a halter hath been fatal to many a great man, as well as a bullet.

SCENE II.

SQUEEZUM, QUILL, STAFF.

QUILL. Sir, here's Mr. Staff, the reforming constable.

STAFF. An't please your worship, we have been at the

gaming-house in the alley, and have taken six prisoners, whereof we discharged two who had your worship's licence.

SQUEEZUM. What are the others?

STAFF. One is a half-pay officer; another an attorney's clerk; and the other two are young gentlemen of the Temple.

SQUEEZUM. Discharge the officer and the clerk; there is nothing to be got by the army or the law: the one hath no money, and the other will part with none. But be not too forward to quit the Templars.

STAFF. Asking your worship's pardon, I don't care to run my finger into the lion's mouth. I would not willingly have to do with any limb of the law.

SQUEEZUM. Fear not; these bear no nearer affinity to lawyers than a militia regiment of squires do to soldiers; the one gets no more by his gown than the other by his sword. These are men that bring estates to the Temple, instead of getting them there.

STAFF. Nay, they are bedaubed with lace as fine as lords.

SQUEEZUM. Never fear a lawyer in lace.——The lawyer that sets out in lace always ends in rags.

STAFF. I'll secure them.—We went to the house where your worship commanded us, and heard the dice in the street; but there were two coaches with coronets on them at the door, so we thought it proper not to go in.

SQUEEZUM. You did right. The laws are turnpikes, only made to stop people who walk on foot, and not to interrupt those who drive through them in their coaches.——The laws are like a game at loo, where a blaze of court cards is always secure, and the knaves are the safest cards in the pack.

STAFF. We have taken up a man for rape too.

SQUEEZUM. What is he?

STAFF. I fancy he's some great man; for he talks French, sings Italian, and swears English.

SQUEEZUM. Is he rich?

STAFF. I believe not, for we can't get a farthing out of him.

SQUEEZUM. A certain sign that he is. Deep pockets are like deep streams; and money, like water, never runs faster than in the shallows.

STAFF. Then there's another misfortune too.

SQUEEZUM. What's that?

STAFF. The woman will not swear any thing against him.

SQUEEZUM. Never fear that; I'll make her swear enough for my purpose. What sort of woman is she?

STAFF. A common whore, I believe.

SQUEEZUM. The properest person in the world to swear a rape. A modest woman is as shy of swearing a rape, as a gentleman is of swearing a battery.——We will make her swear enough to frighten him into a composition, a small part of which will satisfy the woman. So go bring them before me.—But hold! have you been at home since I sent a prisoner thither this morning?

STAFF. Yes, an't please your worship.

SQUEEZUM. And what says he?

STAFF. He threatens us confoundedly; and says you have committed him without any accusation. I'm afraid we shall get nothing out of him.

SQUEEZUM. We'll try him till noon, however.

SCENE III.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I desire, Mr. Squeezum, you would finish all your dirty work this morning; for I am resolved to have the house to myself in the afternoon.

SQUEEZUM. You shall, my dear; and I shall be obliged to you, if you can let me have the coach this morning.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I shall use it myself.

SQUEEZUM. Then I must get horses put into the chariot.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I am not determined whether I shall use the coach or chariot; so it is impossible you should have

either. Besides, a hack is the properest to do business in; and as I cannot spare you a servant, will look better.

SQUEEZUM. Well, child, well, it shall be so.—Let me only beg the favour of dining a little sooner than ordinary.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. That is so far from being possible, that we cannot dine till an hour later than usual, because I must attend an auction, or I shall lose a little china bason which is worth its weight in jewels, and it is probable I may get it for its weight in gold, which will not be above one hundred guineas; and those you must give me, child.

SQUEEZUM. A hundred guineas for a china bason! Oh, the devil take the East India trade! The clay of the one Indies runs away with all the gold of the other.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I may buy it for less; but it is good to have rather too much money about one, than too little.

SQUEEZUM. In short, I cannot support your extravagance.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I do not desire you to support my extravagance.

SQUEEZUM. I wish you would not.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Thus stands the case: you say I am extravagant; I say I am not: sure, my word will balance yours every where but at Hicks's Hall.—And harkye, my dear; if, whenever I ask for a trifle, you object my extravagance to me, I'll be revenged; I'll blow you up, I'll discover all your midnight intrigues, your protecting ill houses, your bribing juries, your snacking fees, your whole train of rogueries. If you do not allow me what I ask, I'll bid fair to enter on my jointure, sir.

SQUEEZUM. Well, my dear, this time you shall be indulged.—Trust a thief or lawyer with your purse, a whore or physician with your constitution, but never trust a dangerous secret with your wife; for, when once you have put it into her power to hang you, the sooner you are hanged the better. [*Aside.*

SCENE IV.

SQUEEZUM, QUILL, MRS. SQUEEZUM, STAFF, WATCH, RAMBLE, HILARET.

STAFF. An't please your worship, here is a gentleman hath committed a rape last night on this young woman.

SQUEEZUM. How! a rape! Hath he committed a rape on you, child?

MRS. SQUEEZUM. This may be worth hearing. [*Aside.*

HILARET. Sir, I have nothing to say against him. I desire you would give us both our liberty. He was a little frolicsome last night, which made me call for these peoples' help; and when once they had taken hold of us, they would not suffer us to go away.

SQUEEZUM. They did their duty.——The power of discharging lieth in us, and not in them.

RAMBLE. Sir.——

SQUEEZUM. Sir, I beg we may not be interrupted. Harkye, young woman, if this gentleman hath treated you in an ill manner, do not let your modesty prevent the execution of justice. Consider, you will be guilty yourself of the next offence he commits; and upon my word, by his looks, it is probable he may commit a dozen rapes within this week.

HILARET. I assure you he is innocent.

SQUEEZUM. Mr. Staff, what say you to this affair?

STAFF. May it please your worship, I saw the prisoner behave in a very indecent manner, and heard the woman say he had ravished away her senses.

SQUEEZUM. Fie upon you, child, will you not swear this?

HILARET. No, sir; but I shall swear something against you, unless you discharge us.

SQUEEZUM. That cannot be, madam; the fact is too plain. If you will not swear now, the prisoner must be kept in custody till you will.

STAFF. If she will not swear, we can swear enough to convict him.

RAMBLE. Very fine, faith! This justice is worse than a grand inquisitor. Pray, honest, formidable sir, what private pique have you against me, that you would compel the lady to deserve the pillory, in order to promote me higher?

SQUEEZUM. My dear, did you ever see such a ravishing look as this fellow hath? Sir, if I was a judge, I would hang you without any evidence at all. They are such fellows as these who sow dissension between man and wife, and keep up the names of cuckold and bastard in the kingdom.

RAMBLE. Nay, if that be all you accuse me of, I will confess it freely, I have employed my time pretty well. Though as I do not remember ever to have done you the honour of dubbing, Mr. Justice, I cannot see why you should be so incensed against me; for I do not imagine you any otherwise an enemy to these amusements than a popish priest to sin, or a doctor to disease.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. You are very civil, sir, to threaten to dub my husband before my face.

RAMBLE. I ask pardon, madam; I did not know with whom I had the honour to be in company: it was always against my inclination to affront a lady; but a woman of your particular merit must have claimed the most particular respect.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I should have expected no rudeness from a gentleman of your appearance, and would much rather attribute any misbecoming word to inadvertency than to design.

RAMBLE. Madam, I know not how to thank so much goodness; but do assure you, I would buy an introduction to your acquaintance at a much greater danger than this prosecution, which, I believe, you already see the malice of. I hope, madam, I stand already acquitted in your opinion.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I hope, sir, it will only appear to have been a frolic: I must own I have been always a great enemy to force——since there are so many willing.

RAMBLE. So, I find there is no danger of a rape here. [*Aside.*

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Well, child, can you find any thing against this gentleman?

SQUEEZUM. The woman is difficult of confessing in public: but I fancy when I examine her in private, I may get it out of her.—So, Mr. Constable, withdraw your prisoner.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Nay, he appears so much of a gentleman, that till there be stronger evidence, I will take charge of him.——Come, sir, you shall go drink a dish of tea with me.—You may stay without. [*To the* Constable, *&c.*

RAMBLE. This kindness of yours, madam, will be an encouragement to offenders.

SCENE V.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET.

SQUEEZUM. Come, come, child, you had better take the oath, though you are not altogether so sure. Justice should be rigorous. It is better for the public that ten innocent people should suffer, than that one guilty should escape: and it becomes every good person to sacrifice their conscience to the benefit of the public.

HILARET. Would you persuade me to perjure myself?

SQUEEZUM. By no means. Not for the world. Perjury indeed! Do you think I do not know what perjury is better than you? He did attempt to ravish you, you own; very well. He that attempts to do you an injury, hath done it in his heart. Besides, a woman may be ravished, ay, and many a woman hath been ravished, ay, and men been hanged for it——when she hath not certainly known she hath been ravished.

HILARET. You are a great casuist in conscience. But you may spare yourself any further trouble: for I assure you it will be in vain.

SQUEEZUM. I see where your hesitation hangs; you are

afraid of spoiling your trade.—You think severity to a customer will keep people from your house.—Pray, answer me one question—How long have you been upon the town?

HILARET. What do you mean?

SQUEEZUM. Come, come, I see you are but a novice, and I like you the better: for yours is the only business wherein people do not profit by experience.—You are very handsome —It is a pity you should continue in this abandoned state. —Give me a kiss;—Nay, be not coy to me.——I protest, you are as full of beauty as the rose is of sweetness, and I of love as its stalk is full of briars——Oh! that we were as closely joined together too.

HILARET. Why, you will commit a rape yourself, Mr. Justice.

SQUEEZUM. If I thought you would prove constant, I would take you into keeping: for I have not liked a woman so much these many years.

HILARET. I will humour this old villain, I am resolved. [*Aside.*

SQUEEZUM. What think you, could you be constant to a vigorous, healthy, middle-aged man, hey!—Could this buy thy affections off from a set of idle rascals, who carry their gold upon their backs, and have pockets as empty as their heads? Fellows who are greater curses on a woman than the vapours; for as those persuade her into imaginary diseases, these present her with real.——Let thy silence give consent: here, take this purse as an earnest of what I'll do for you.

HILARET. Well, and what shall I do for this?

SQUEEZUM. You shall do—You shall do nothing; I will do. I will be a verb active, and you shall be a verb passive.

HILARET. I wish you be not of the neuter gender.

SQUEEZUM. Why you little arch rogue, do you understand Latin, hussy?

HILARET. A little, sir! My father was a country parson, and gave all his children a good education. He taught his daughters to write and read himself.

SQUEEZUM. What, have you sisters, then?

HILARET. Alack-a-day, sir! sixteen of us, and all in the same way of business.

SQUEEZUM. Ay, this it is to teach daughters to write. I would as soon put a sword into the hands of a madman, as a pen into those of a woman; for a pen in the hand of a woman is as sure an instrument of propagation, as a sword in that of a madman is of destruction. [*Aside.*]——Sure, my dear, the spirit of love must run very strongly in the blood of your whole family.

HILARET. Oh, sir, it was a villainous man of war that harboured near us.—My poor sisters were ruined by the officers, and I fell a martyr to the chaplain.

SQUEEZUM. Ay, ay, the sailors are as fatal to our women as the soldiers are. One Venus rose from the sea, and thousands have set in it—But not Venus herself could compare to thee, my little honeysuckle.

HILARET. Be not so hot, sir.

SQUEEZUM. Bid the touchwood be cold behind the burning-glass. The touchwood is not more easily kindled by the sun, than I by your dear eyes.

HILARET. The touchwood is not drier, I dare swear.

SQUEEZUM. But hark, I hear my wife returning.—Leave word with my clerk where I shall send to you—I will be the kindest of keepers, very constant, and very liberal.—

HILARET. Two charming qualities in a lover!

SQUEEZUM. My pretty nosegay, you will find me vastly preferable to idle young rakehells. Besides, you are safe with me. You are as safe with a justice in England, as a priest abroad; gravity is the best cloak for sin in all countries.—Be sure to be punctual to the time I shall appoint you.

HILARET. Be not afraid of me.

SQUEEZUM. Adieu, my pretty charmer. I shall burn with impatience.

SCENE VI.

SQUEEZUM. [*Solus.*] Go thy way for a charming girl! Now if I can get her at this wild fellow's expense, I shall have

performed the part of a shrewd justice; for I would make others pay for my sins as well as their own. I fancy my wife hath sufficiently frightened him by this, and that he will truckle to any terms to be acquitted; for I must own she will pump a man much better than I.——Oh! here they come. I must deal with my gentleman now in another style.

SCENE VII.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM, RAMBLE.

RAMBLE. Well, sir, is the lady determined to swear stoutly?

SQUEEZUM. Truly, it is hard to say what she determines; she's gone to ask the advice of a divine and a lawyer.

RAMBLE. Then the odds are against me: for the lawyer will certainly advise her to swear; and it is possible the priest may not contradict her in it.

SQUEEZUM. It is indeed a ticklish point, and it were advisable to make it up as soon as possible. The first loss is always the least. It is better to wet your coat than your skin, and to run home when the clouds begin to drop, than in the middle of the storm. In short, it were better to give a brace of hundred pounds to make up the matter now than to venture the consequence. I am heartily concerned to see gentlemen in such a misfortune. I am sorry the age is so corrupt. Really I expect to see some grievous and heavy judgment fall on the nation. We are as bad as ever Sodom and Gomorrah were; and I wish we may not be as miserable.

RAMBLE. Hark'ee justice; I take a sermon to be the first punishment which a man undergoes after conviction. It is very hard I must be condemned to it beforehand.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Nay, sir, I am sure Mr. Squeezum speaks for your good.——(I shall get a necklace out of this affair.) [*Aside.*

SQUEEZUM. Ay, that I am sure I do: my interest sways not one way or the other.—I would, were I in that gentleman's circumstances, do what I advise him to.

RAMBLE. Faith, sir, that I must doubt: for, were you in my circumstances, you would not be worth the money.

SQUEEZUM. Nay, sir, now you jest with me; a gentleman can never be at a loss for such a trifle.

RAMBLE. Faith, sir, you mistake. I know a great many gentlemen not worth three farthings. He that resolves to be honest cannot resolve not to be poor.

SQUEEZUM. A gentleman, and poor; sir, they are contradictions. A man may as well be a scholar without learning, as a gentleman without riches. But I have no time to dally with you. If you do not understand good usage, while it is dealt you, you may when you feel the reverse. The affair may now be made up for a trifle; the time may come when your whole fortune would be too little.—An hour's delay in the making up an offence is as dangerous as in the sewing up of a wound.

RAMBLE. Well, you have over-persuaded me; I'll take your advice.

SQUEEZUM. I'll engage you will not repent it——I don't question but you will regard me as your friend.

RAMBLE. That I do, indeed. And to give you the most substantial instance of it I will ask a favour, which is expected only from the most intimate friendship—which is, that you will be so kind to lend the money.

SQUEEZUM. Alack-a-day, sir, I have not such a sum in my command. Besides, how must it look in me, who am an officer of justice, to lend a culprit money wherewith to evade justice! Alas, sir, we must consider our characters in life, we must act up to our characters: and though I deviate a little from mine, in giving you advice, it would be entirely forsaking the character of a justice to give you money.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I wonder how you could ask it.

RAMBLE. Necessity obliges to any thing, madam. Mr. Squeezum was so kind to show me the necessity of giving

money, and my pockets were so cruel to show me the impossibility of it.

. .SQUEEZUM. Well, sir, if you cannot pay for your transgressions like the rich, you must suffer for them like the poor.——Here, Constable!

SCENE VIII.

SQUEEZUM. MRS. SQUEEZUM, RAMBLE, STAFF, CONSTABLES.

SQUEEZUM. Take away your prisoner; keep him in safe custody till further orders. If you come to a wiser resolution within these two hours, send me word: after that it will be too late.

RAMBLE. Hark'ee, Mr. Justice, you had better use me as you ought, and acquit me: for, if you do any thing which you cannot defend, hang me if I am not revenged on you.

SQUEEZUM. Hang you!——I wish there may not be more meaning in those words than you imagine.

RAMBLE. 'Sdeath! you old rascal, I can scarce forbear rattling those old dry bones of thine till they crack thy withered skin.

SQUEEZUM. Bear evidence of this; I am threatened in the execution of my office.

RAMBLE. Come, honest Mr. Constable, Mr. Nocturnal Justice, let me go any where from this fellow—The night hath chosen a better justice than the day.

SCENE IX.

SQUEEZUM, MRS. SQUEEZUM.

SQUEEZUM. I am afraid I shall make nothing of this fellow at last. I have a mind to discharge him.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Oh! by no means; for I am sure he hath money.

SQUEEZUM. Yes, and so am I. But suppose he will not part with it; it is impossible to take it from him: for there is no law yet in being to screen a justice of peace from a downright robbery.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Try him a little longer, however.

SQUEEZUM. I will till the afternoon; but, if he should not consent by that time, I must discharge him; for I have no hopes in the woman's swearing. She is discharged already.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I'll make him a visit at the constable's house, and try if I can alarm him into a composition. I may make him do more than you imagine.

SQUEEZUM. Do so, my dear——I doubt not your power —Good-morrow, honey.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. But, my dear, pray remember the hundred guineas.

SQUEEZUM. Yes, yes, I shall remember them; they are not likely to be soon forgotten.—Follow me to my escritoire.

SCENE X.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. [*Sola.*] Since you are sure of going to the devil, honest spouse, I'll take care to equip you with a pair of horns, that you may be as like one another as possible. This dear wild fellow must be mine, and shall be mine: I like him so well, that if he had even ravished me, on my conscience I should have forgiven him.

SCENE XI.—*Mr. Worthy's.*

WORTHY, POLITIC.

WORTHY. Upon my word, Mr. Politic, I am heartily sorry for this occasion of renewing our acquaintance. I can

imagine the tenderness of a parent, though I never was one.

POLITIC. Indeed, neighbour Worthy, you cannot imagine half the troubles, without having undergone them. Matrimony baulks our expectations every way; and our children as seldom prove comforts to us as our wives. I had but two—whereof one was hanged long ago—and the other I suppose may be in a fair way by this.

WORTHY. In what manner did she escape from you?

POLITIC. She had taken leave of me to retire to rest, not half an hour before I heard of her departure. I impute it all to the wicked instructions of an imp of the devil called a chambermaid, who is the companion of her flight.

WORTHY. But do you know of no lover?

POLITIC. Let me see——hey!——there hath been a fellow in a red coat, with whom she hath conversed for some time in spite of my teeth.

WORTHY. Depend on it, he is the occasion of your loss. I can grant you a warrant against him, if you know his name, though I fear you are too late.

POLITIC. No, sir, I am not too late; my daughter is an heiress, and you know the punishment for stealing an heiress. If I could hang the rascal, it would be some satisfaction.

WORTHY. That will be impossible, without her consent; and truly if she be married, I would advise you to follow the example of that emperor who, when he discovered something worse than a marriage between one of his subjects and his daughter, chose rather to let him enjoy her as his own than punish him.

POLITIC. Pray where did that emperor reign?

WORTHY. I have almost forgotten, but I think it was one of the Greek emperors, or one of the Turks.

POLITIC. Bring me no example from the Turks, good Mr. Worthy, I find no such affinity in our interests. Sir, I dread and abhor the Turks. I wish we do not feel them before we are aware.

WORTHY. But, sir——

POLITIC. But me no buts——what can be the reason of all this warlike preparation, which all our newspapers have informed us of? Yes, and the same newspapers a hundred times in the same words. Is the design against Persia? Is the design against Germany? Is the design against Italy? ——Suppose we should see Turkish galleys in the channel? We may feel them, yes, we may feel them in the midst of our security. Troy was taken in its sleep, and so may we.

WORTHY. Sure, sir, you are asleep, or in a dream—

POLITIC. Yes, yes, these things are called idle dreams—the justest apprehensions may be styled dreams—but let me tell you, sir, men betray their own ignorance, often, in attacking that of other men.

WORTHY. But what is all this to your daughter?

POLITIC. Never tell me of my daughter, my country is dearer to me than a thousand daughters; should the Turks come among us, what would become of our daughters then? and our sons, and our wives, and our estates, and our houses, and our religion, and our liberty?—When a Turkish aga should command our nobility, and janizaries make grandfathers of lords, where should we look for Britain then?

WORTHY. Truly, where I may look for Mr. Politic now, in the clouds.

POLITIC. Give me leave, sir, only to let you a little into the present state of Turkey.

WORTHY. I must beg to be excused, sir; if I can be of any service to you, in relation to your daughter, you may command my attention: I may probably defend you from our own countrymen, but truly from the Turks I cannot.

POLITIC. I am glad to hear you have some apprehension of them, as well as myself—That you are not so stupidly bespotted, as I meet with some people at the coffee-house; but perhaps you are not enough apprised of the danger. Give me leave only to show you how it is possible for the Grand Signior to find an ingress into Europe.—Suppose, sir, this spot I stand on to be Turkey—then here is Hungary—very well—here is France, and here is England—granted—then we will suppose he had possession of Hungary

—what then remains but to conquer France, before we find him at our own coast.—But, sir, this is not all the danger, now I will show you how he can come by sea to us.

WORTHY. Dear sir, refer that to some other time; you have sufficiently satisfied me, I assure you.

POLITIC. It is almost time to go to the coffee-house—so, dear Mr. Worthy, I am your most obedient servant.

WORTHY. Mr. Politic, your very humble servant.

SCENE XII.

WORTHY. [*Solus.*] I recollect the dawnings of this political humour to have appeared when we were at the Bath together; but it has risen finely in these ten years. What an enthusiasm must it have arrived to, when it could make him forget the loss of his only daughter! The greatest part of mankind labour under one delirium or other: and Don Quixote differed from the rest, not in madness, but the species of it. The covetous, the prodigal, the superstitious, the libertine, and the coffee-house politician, are all Quixotes in their several ways.

That man alone from madness free, we find,
Who, by no wild unruly passion blind,
To reason gives the conduct of his mind.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

HILARET, CLORIS, *meeting.*

HILARET. Dear Cloris.

CLORIS. Dear madam, is it you? you altogether?

HILARET. Ay, ay, altogether, thank Heavens! I had like to have lost something, but all's safe, I assure you.

CLORIS. Ah! madam, I wish it were.

HILARET. What, don't you believe me?

CLORIS. I wish you could not me, or I myself. Poor Captain Constant——

HILARET. What of him?

CLORIS. Oh! madam!

HILARET. Speak quickly, or kill me, which you please——

CLORIS. ——Is taken up for a rape.

HILARET. How!

CLORIS. It is too true, his own servant told me.

HILARET. His servant belied him, and so do you—— Show me where he is; if he be in a dungeon, I'll find him out.

CLORIS. Very generous, indeed, madam! A king should sooner visit a prisoner for treason than I a lover for a rape.

HILARET. It would be unpardonable in me to entertain so flagrant a belief, at the first hearing, against a man who hath given me such substantial proofs of his constancy: besides, an affair of my own makes me the more doubtful of the truth of this; but, if there appear any proof of such a fact, I will drive him for ever from my thoughts.

CLORIS. Yes, madam, Justice Squeezum will take care to have him driven another way.

HILARET. Justice Squeezum! Let me hug you for that information. Now, I can almost swear he is innocent: I have such an adventure to surprise you with; but let me not lose a moment——come, show me the way.

CLORIS. Poor creature! she knows the way to her destruction too well——but it would be impertinence in a servant to put her out of it. [*Aside.*

SCENE II.—*The Constable's House.*

CONSTANT [*Alone.*] I begin to be of that philosopher's opinion, who said, that whoever will entirely consult his own happiness must be little concerned about the happiness of others. Good nature is Quixotism, and every Princess

Micomicona will lead her deliverer into a cage. What had I to do to interpose? What harm did the misfortunes of an unknown woman bring me, that I should hazard my own happiness and reputation on her account?—But sure, to swear a rape against me for having rescued her from a ravisher is an unparalleled piece of ingratitude.

SCENE III.

CONSTANT *and* MRS. STAFF.

MRS. STAFF. Will your honour please to drink a dram, or some 'rack punch?

CONSTANT. Dear madam, do not trouble me; I can drink nothing.

MRS. STAFF. Truly sir, but I can. Not trouble you! I had never such a customer here before. You a captain charged with rape! I should sooner take you for some poor attorney, charged with forgery and perjury; or a travelling parson, with stealing a gown and cassock.

CONSTANT. Drink what you will, and I'll pay what you please.

MRS. STAFF. Thank your honour! your honour will not be offended, I hope——we stand at a great rent: and truly, since this gin act, trade hath been so dull, that I have often wished my husband would live by the highway himself, instead of taking highwaymen.

CONSTANT. You are not the only wife who would give her husband this advice, I dare swear. Nay, were men all so uxorious to take it, Tyburn would have as much business as Doctors' Commons.

MRS. STAFF. I wish it had more; for we must stand and fall by one another; no business there, no business here; and truly, captain, 'tis with sorrow I say it, where we have one felon now, we had ten a year or two ago——I have not seen one prisoner brought in for a rape this fort-

night, except your honour. I hope your handsel will be lucky.

SCENE IV.

CONSTANT, STAFF, MRS. STAFF.

STAFF. Captain, your servant; I suppose you will be glad of company——here is a very civil gentleman, I assure you.

MRS. STAFF. More gentlemen! this is rare news indeed.

CONSTANT. I had rather be let alone.

STAFF. I have but this one prison-room, Captain; besides, I assure you, this is no common fellow, but a very fine gentleman, a captain too—and as merry a one——

CONSTANT. What is the cause of his misfortune?

STAFF. A rape, Captain, a rape—no dishonourable offence—I would not have brought any scoundrels into your honour's company; but rape and murder no gentleman need be ashamed of; and this is an honest brother ravisher—I have ravished women myself formerly: but a wife blunts a man's edge. When once you are married you will leave off ravishing, I warrant you—to be bound in wedlock is as good a security against rapes, as to be bound over to the peace is against murder.

MRS. STAFF. My husband will have his jest, I hope your honour will pardon him.

STAFF. But here is the gentleman.

SCENE V.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, STAFF, MRS. STAFF.

CONSTANT. Prodigious!

RAMBLE. Dear Constant!

CONSTANT. What in the name of wonder hath brought you to England?

RAMBLE. What in the devil's name hath brought thee to the Constable's?

CONSTANT. Only a rape, sir; no dishonourable offence, as Mr. Constable hath it.

RAMBLE. You jest.

STAFF. No, sir, upon my word, the Captain is in earnest.

RAMBLE. Why, I should sooner have suspected ermine or lawn-sleeves. But I see gravity and hypocrisy are inseparable.——Well, give me thy hand, brother, for our fortunes agree exactly.

STAFF. And will agree in the end, I don't question. This is not the first time of their meeting together on this account; a couple of old whore-masters, I warrant them. [*Aside.*

MRS. STAFF. Will your honours please to drink any punch, noble captains? it will keep up your spirits.

STAFF. Don't force the gentlemen, wife, to drink whether they will or no.—I wish you well off this affair—in the meantime, whatever my house affords is at your service—and let me assure you, the more you drink, the less you will lament your misfortune.

RAMBLE. Spoken like a true philosopher.

SCENE VI.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE.

RAMBLE. But, Dear Billy, I hope thou hast not really committed, hey?

CONSTANT. What I heartily repent of, I assure you. I rescued a woman in the street, for which she was so kind to swear a rape against me; but it gives me no uneasiness equal to the pleasure I enjoy in seeing you.

RAMBLE. Ever kind and good natured!

CONSTANT. Yet I wish our meeting had been on another occasion; for the freedom of your life makes me suspect the

consequence of your confinement may be heavier than mine.

RAMBLE. I can't tell what the consequence may be, nor shall I trouble myself about it: but I assure thee, no sucking babe can be more innocent. If our cases differ in any thing, it is in this, that my woman hath not sworn.

CONSTANT. This pleases me indeed! But, pray, how came you to leave the Indies, where I thought you had been settled for life?

RAMBLE. Why, on the same account that I went thither, that I now am here, by which I live, and for which I live, a woman.

CONSTANT. A woman!

RAMBLE. Ay, a fine, young, rich woman! a widow with fourscore thousand pounds in her pocket—There's a North star to steer by!

CONSTANT. What is her name?

RAMBLE. Her name——her name is Ramble.

CONSTANT. What, married?

RAMBLE. Ay, sir; soon after you left the Indies, honest Mr. Ingot left the world, and me the heir to his wife with all her effects.

CONSTANT. I wish you joy, dear Jack; this thy good fortune hath so filled me with delight, that I have no room for my own sorrows.

RAMBLE. But I have not unfolded half yet.

SOTMORE. [*Without.*] Let two quarts of rum be made into punch, let it be hot—hot as hell.

RAMBLE. D'ye hear, we are in a fine condition, 'faith!

SCENE VII.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE, STAFF.

SOTMORE. Here they are, here are a brace of desponding whore-masters for you—Ramble, what, nothing to say in praise of the women! Mark Anthony made a fine bargain,

hey, when he gave the world for a woman? 'Sdeath, if he had been alive now, I'd have waged six gallons of claret I had seen him hanged for a rape—as I shall very suddenly my two worthy friends.

RAMBLE. Hark'ee, Sotmore, if you say any thing against the women, we'll cut your throat, and toss justice in a murder into the bargain.

SOTMORE. Not speak against women! you shall as soon compel me not to drink: you shall sew up my lips, if you do either.—Here, you, let the punch be gotten ready.

STAFF. It shall, an't please your honour. (This gentleman is a rare customer to a house; I wish he would commit a rape too.) [*Aside.*

SCENE VIII.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE.

CONSTANT. You must not rail against the ladies, Sotmore, before Ramble; for he is a married man.

RAMBLE. And what is better, my wife is at the bottom of the sea.

SOTMORE. And what is worse, all her effects are at the bottom of the sea with her.

CONSTANT. How!

RAMBLE. Faith! Sotmore hath spoken truth for once. ——Notwithstanding my pleasantry, the lady and her fortune are both gone together; she went to the other world fourscore thousand strong; and, if there be any such thing there, I don't question but she is married again by this time.

SOTMORE. You would not take my advice. I have cautioned thee never to trust any thing on the same bottom with a woman. I would not ensure a ship that had a woman on board for double the price.—The sins of one woman are enough to draw down a judgment on a fleet.

RAMBLE. Here's a fellow, who, like a prude, makes sin a handle to his abuse.—Art thou not ashamed to mention sin—who art a cargo of iniquity? Why wilt thou fill thy

venomed mouth with that of others, when thou hast such stores of thy own?

CONSTANT. What occasioned your separating?

RAMBLE. A storm, and my ill stars. I left the ship wherein she was to dine with the captain of one of our convoy, when, a sudden violent storm arising, I lost sight of her ship, and from that day have never seen or heard of her.

SOTMORE. Nor ever will—I heartily hope. Though as for the innocent chests, those I wish delivered out of the deep. But the sea knows its own good: it will be sure to keep the money, though possibly it may refund the woman; for a woman will swim like a cork, and they are both of the same value; nay, the latter is the more valuable, as it preserves our wine, which women often spoil.

CONSTANT. Why, Sotmore, wine is the touchstone of all merit with thee, as gold is to a stock-jobber; and thou wouldst as soon sell thy soul for a bottle, as he for a guinea.

SOTMORE. Wine, sir, is as apt a comparison to every thing that is good, as woman is to every thing that is bad.

CONSTANT. Fie, Sotmore! this railing against the ladies will make your company as scandalous to gentlemen as railing at religion would to a parson.

RAMBLE. Right, Constant! they are my religion, I am the high-priest of the sex.

SOTMORE. Women and religion! Women and the devil: he leaves his votaries in the lurch, and so do they.

CONSTANT. I fancy, Ramble, this friend of ours will turn parson, one day or other——

RAMBLE. If he was not such a sot, I should think it possible.

SOTMORE. Why, faith! I am almost superstitious enough to fancy this a judgment on thee for breaking thy word.—Did I not tell thee, thou wert strolling off to some little dirty whore! and you see the truth of my prophecy.

RAMBLE. Thou art in the right: it was not only a whore, but the most impudent of all whores——a modest whore.

CONSTANT. A modest whore! let her be married to an honest attorney, by all means.

RAMBLE. And sent together to people his majesty's plantations.

SOTMORE. Modesty, now-a-days, as often covers impudence as it doth ugliness. It is as uncertain a sign of virtue as quality is, or as fine clothes are of quality.

RAMBLE. Yet to do her right: the persuasions of the justice could not prevail with her to perjure herself.

SOTMORE. Conscientious strumpet! she hopes to pick your pocket another time, which it were charity to thee to wish she might: for, if thou escapest this, she certainly will have an opportunity.

RAMBLE. Pray, honest Nol, how didst thou find us out? for a boy would as soon have sent for his schoolmaster when he was caught in an orchard as I for thee on this occasion.

SOTMORE. Find you out! why the town rings of you—— there is not a husband or guardian in it but what is ready to get drunk for joy. If the woman be not gold-proof, she will be bribed to swear against you. You are a nuisance, sir! I don't believe he hath been in town six days, and he hath had above sixteen women.

RAMBLE. And they are a nobler pleasure than so many gallons which thou hast swallowed in that time.

SOTMORE. Sir, I pay my vintner, and therefore do no injury.

RAMBLE. And, sir, I do no injury: and therefore have no reason to pay.

SOTMORE. Hey-day! is taking away a man's wife or daughter no injury?

RAMBLE. Not when the wife is weary of her husband, and the daughter longs for one.

CONSTANT. Art thou not ashamed, Sotmore, to throw a man's sins in his face, while he is suffering for them?

SOTMORE. That is the time, sir; besides, you see what an effect it hath on him: you might as well rail at a knight of the post in the pillory.

RAMBLE. Let him alone, the punch will be here immediately, and then he'll have no leisure to rail.

SOTMORE. Is it not enough to make a man rail, to have

parted with a friend happy in the night, and to find him the next morning in so fair a way to—Death and damnation! Show me the whore; I'll be revenged on her and the whole sex. If thou art hanged for ravishing her, I'll be hanged for murdering her. Describe the little mischief to me. Is she tall, short, black, brown, fair? In what form hath the devil disguised himself?

RAMBLE. In a very beautiful one, I assure you: she hath the finest shape that ever was beheld, genteel to a miracle; then the brightest eyes that ever glanced on a lover, the prettiest little mouth, and lips as red as a cherry; and for her breasts, not snow, marble, lilies, alabaster, ivory, can come up to their whiteness; but their little, pretty, firm, round form, no art can imitate, no thought conceive——Oh! Sotmore, I could die ten thousand millions of times upon them——

SOTMORE. You are only likely to die once for them.

CONSTANT. All these raptures about a common whore, Ramble?

SOTMORE. Ay, every woman he sees, they are all alike to him, modest or immodest, high or low, from the garret to the cellar, St. James's to the stews; find him but a woman, and he'll make an angel of her.—He hath the same taste for women as a child for pictures, or a hungry glutton for an entertainment: every piece is a Venus, and every dish an ortolan.

RAMBLE. To say the truth of her, Sotmore must have allowed her handsome, and I must allow her to have been a damned, confounded, common——

SCENE IX.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE, HILARET.

RAMBLE. Ha! conjured up, by Jupiter! Well, my little enemy, do the priest and lawyer consent—and will you swear—ha!

HILARET. [*Not regarding* Ramble, *runs to* Constant.] My Constant!

RAMBLE. Hey-day! what, are we both in for ravishing the same woman;—I see by her fondness, he hath really ravished her.

CONSTANT. O Hilaret! this kindness of yours sinks me the deeper; can you bear to think on one accused of such a crime as I am?

HILARET. Never to believe it can I bear.

CONSTANT. How shall I repay this goodness! Then by Heavens I am innocent. [*They talk apart.*

RAMBLE. Hey! the devil!——Is this Constant's mistress? Here will be fine work, i'faith! [*Aside.*

SOTMORE. Is this the lady that did you the favour, sir? [*To* Ramble.

RAMBLE. This the lady! No———why this is a woman of virtue; though she hath a great resemblance of the other I must confess.

SOTMORE. Then I suppose this is she whom Constant hath toasted this half year—his honourable mistress, with a pox.—Rare company for a man who is in prison for a rape!

HILARET. And was you in that scuffle which parted me and my maid in Leicester Fields?

CONSTANT. It was there this unfortunate accident happened, while I was going to the place of our appointment.

HILARET. It had like to have occasioned another to me, which, that I escaped, I am to thank this gentleman.

RAMBLE. Oh, madam! your most obedient, humble servant. Was it you, dear madam?

CONSTANT. Ha! is it possible my friend can have so far indebted me!——This is a favour I can never return.

RAMBLE. You over-rate it, upon my soul you do; I am sufficiently repaid by this embrace.

CONSTANT. I can never repay thee.—Wouldst thou have given me worlds, it could not have equalled the least favour conferred on this lady.

RAMBLE. I should have conferred some favours on her indeed, if she would have accepted them. [*Aside.*

HILARET. I am glad it is to Mr. Constant's friend I am obliged.

SOTMORE. Yes, you are damnably obliged to him for his character of you. [*Aside.*

CONSTANT. My dear Hilaret, shall I beg to hear it all? I can have no pleasure equal to finding new obligations to this gentleman.

HILARET. Since you desire it——

RAMBLE. I fancy, madam, your fright at that time may have occasioned your forgetting some circumstance; therefore, since Captain Constant desires it, I will tell him the story.—I had just parted from this gentleman, when I heard a young lady's voice crying out for help; (I think the word Rape was mentioned, but that I cannot perfectly remember;) upon this, making directly to the place where the noise proceeded, I found this lady in the arms of a very rude fellow——

HILARET. The most impudent fellow, sure, that ever was born!

RAMBLE. A very impudent fellow, and yet a very cowardly one; for the moment I came up he quitted his hold, and was gone out of sight in the twinkling of an eye.

CONSTANT. My dear Ramble, what hast thou done for me!

RAMBLE. No obligation, dear Constant! I would have done the same for any man breathing. But to proceed: The watch came up, who would not be satisfied with what she then said, but conveyed us both to the Round House, whence we were carried in the morning before Justice Squeezum, and by him, notwithstanding this lady's protestations, your humble servant was committed to that place where he now finds himself with this good company.

CONSTANT. Oh, my friend!—May Heaven send me an opportunity of serving thee in the same manner!

RAMBLE. May that be the only prayer which it denies to Constant!

SCENE X.

CONSTANT, RAMBLE, SOTMORE, HILARET, STAFF.

STAFF. The punch is ready, gentlemen, you may walk down; the liberty of my house is at your service.

SOTMORE. And that is liberty enough, while thou hast punch here. If thy house were a sea of punch, I would not prefer any house in town to it.

STAFF. Your honour shall not want that.

SOTMORE. And I shall want nothing more.

STAFF. Captain, a word with you. [*To* Ramble.] There's Madam Squeezum below desires to speak with you alone.

RAMBLE. Bring her up.—Sotmore, you must excuse me a few moments, Constant and this lady will entertain you.

SOTMORE. Let the moments be very few. I'll lay five gallons to one, this fellow hath another whore in his eye.

SCENE XI.

RAMBLE, MRS. SQUEEZUM.

RAMBLE. So; my affair with my friend's mistress is happily over.——That I should not know a modest woman! But there is so great an affectation of modesty in some women of the town, and so great an affectation of impudence in some women of fashion, that it is not impossible to mistake. Now for Mrs. Justice, her business with me is not exceeding difficult to guess.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. You will think I have a vast deal of charity, captain, who am not only the solicitress of your liberty at home to my husband, but can carry my good nature so far as to visit you in your confinement. I cannot

say but I have a generous pity for any one whom I imagine to be accused wrongfully.

RAMBLE. I am obliged to you indeed, madam, for that supposal.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. You are the cause of it. Wherefore do you imagine I ventured myself alone with you this morning?

RAMBLE. From your great humanity, madam.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Alas, sir! it was to try whether you were really the man you were reported to be; and I am certain I found you as inoffensive, quiet, civil, well-bred a gentleman, as any virtuous woman could have wished. Your behaviour was so modest that I could never imagine it possible you should have been guilty of a rape. No overgrown alderman of sixty, or taper beau of six and twenty, could have been more innocent company.

RAMBLE. Whu!—— [*Aside.*

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Your then carriage hath wrought so great an effect upon me, that I have ventured to trust myself here with you; nay, I could trust myself any where with so modest a gentleman.

RAMBLE. I'll take care, madam, never to forfeit your good opinion of me; you may trust yourself with me any where; I'll never behave in any other manner than becomes the best bred man alive with the best bred lady. I swear by this soft hand, these lips, and all the millions of charms that dwell in this dear body.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. What do you mean?

RAMBLE. I know not what I mean; tongue can't express nor thought conceive—we can only feel the exquisite pleasures love has in store.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Nay, I protest and vow.

RAMBLE. Protestations are as vain as struggling. This closet hath a bed in it that would not disgrace a palace.

SOTMORE. [*At the door.*] Why, Ramble! Jack Ramble! art thou not ashamed to leave thy friends thus for some little dirty strumpet? If thou dost not come immediately, we'll break open the door, and drown her in punch.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. [*Softly.*] I am undone!——

RAMBLE. Fear nothing.——Go to your bowl, I'll come this instant.

SOTMORE. I'll not wag without you.

RAMBLE. Then I'll come down. break your bowl, and spill all your liquor.

SOTMORE. Bring thy whore along with thee! there's one there already, she'll be glad of her company: if you don't come in an instant, I will be back again.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. What shall I do?

RAMBLE. My angel! love shall instruct thee.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Let me go—some other time—I will not run any venture here.

RAMBLE. I will not part with you.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. You shall hear from me in half an hour. You shall have your liberty, and I'll appoint you where to meet me.

RAMBLE. Shall I depend on you?

MRS. SQUEEZUM. You may——Adieu.——Don't follow me: I can slip out a back way.

RAMBLE. Farewell, my angel!

SCENE XII.

RAMBLE. [*Solus.*] Confound this drunken rascal! this is not the first time he hath spoiled an intrigue for me. But hold, as I am to have my liberty beforehand, I don't think this half-hour's delay at all unlucky. That consideration may sufficiently compensate the staying of my stomach. This adventure of mine begins to put on a tolerable aspect. An intrigue with a rich justice's wife is not to be slighted by a young fellow of a desperate fortune. I do not doubt but in a very short time, when I am taken up for the next rape, to bribe the justice with his own money.—Lend a man your gold, he may forget the debt; venture your life for him, he may forget the obligation: but once engage his

wife, and you secure his friendship. There is no friend in all extremity so sure as your cuckold—and the surest hold you can take of a man, as of a bull, is by his horns.

SCENE XIII.

RAMBLE, CONSTANT, SOTMORE, HILARET.

SOTMORE. Ha! what's become of thy wench? If thou hadst none, thy absence was the more inexcusable.

CONSTANT. O Ramble! this our better genius hath invented the most notable plot!——Such a net is laid for the justice! it will at once entangle him, and disentangle us. Mr. Hogshead here is to play his part too.

RAMBLE. I am sorry we cannot do without him; for, should there be any claret in the way, he'd disappoint the whole affair for one bottle.

SOTMORE. Not for the best Burgundy in France. This lady hath won my heart by one bumper.——By all the pleasures of drinking, madam, I like you more than your whole sex put together. There is no honesty in man or woman that will not drink. Honesty is tried in wine, as gold is in the fire. Madam, you have made a conquest of me. I'll drink your health as long as I can stand, and that's as long as a reasonable woman can require.

HILARET. I am exceedingly proud of my conquest over a man of Mr. Sotmore's good sense.

CONSTANT. Upon my word you may, you are the first woman I believe he ever was civil to.

SOTMORE. It was because they none of them had your merit: a parcel of tea-drinking sluts.——If I had a daughter that drank tea, I would turn her out of doors. The reason that men are honester than women is, their liquors are stronger. If the sex were bred up to brandy and tobacco, if they all liked drinking as well as you seem to do, madam, I should turn a lover.

RAMBLE. Why, Constant, such another compliment would make thee jealous.

HILARET. Upon my word he hath reason already!

SOTMORE. Madam, I like you; and if a bottle of Burgundy were on one side, and you on the other, I do not know which I should choose.

CONSTANT. Thou wouldst choose the bottle I am sure.

RAMBLE. But I long to hear this conspiracy.

SOTMORE. Then it must be below. I strictly forbid any secrets to be told but at the council-table. The rose is ever understood over the drinking room, and a glass is the surest turnkey to the lips.

CONSTANT. That's contrary to the opinion of philosophers.

SOTMORE. Of the sober ones it may; but all your wise philosophers were a set of the most drunken dogs alive. I never knew a sober fellow but was an ass——and your ass is the soberest of all animals. Your sober philosophers and their works have been buried long ago. I remember a saying of that great philosopher and poet, Horace, who wrote in Falernian instead of ink:

> No verses last——can long escape the night,
> Which the dull scribbling water-drinkers write.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—SQUEEZUM'S.

SQUEEZUM, QUILL.

SQUEEZUM. You delivered my letter?

QUILL. Yes, an 't please your worship, I left it at the coffee-house, where she directed me.

SQUEEZUM. Very well.——Quill!

QUILL. Sir.

SQUEEZUM. I think I may trust thee with any secret—and what I am now going to tell will show thee what a confidence I put in thee.——In short, Quill, I suspect my wife—

QUILL. Of what, sir?

SQUEEZUM. I am afraid that I am not the only person free with her, and that I am free of the corporation of cuckolds.

QUILL. Then your worship is free of all the corporations in England.

SQUEEZUM. Now thou knowest that there are very wholesome laws against cuckoldom; the advantage of a man's horns is, that he may shove his wife out of doors with them.

QUILL. And that is no inconsiderable advantage.

SQUEEZUM. But there must be a discovery first. It is not enough that a man knows himself to be a cuckold; the world must know it too. He that will keep his horns in his pocket must keep his wife in his bosom. Therefore, Quill, as it is in your power to observe my wife, I assure you a very handsome reward on her conviction: for I begin to find, that if I do not discover her, she will shortly discover me, or ruin me by bribing her to hold her tongue. It is not a little gold will make a gag for a woman.

QUILL. Sir, I shall be as diligent as possible.

SQUEEZUM. And I am as liberal on your success.

[*Exit* Squeezum.

SCENE II.

QUILL. [*Solus.*] Indeed justice, that bait will not do. I know you too well to trust to your liberality. Your wife will reward services better than you. Besides, I have too much honour to take fees on both sides.—And since I am her pimp in ordinary, I'll go like an honest and dutiful servant, and discover this conspiracy; for should she once be turned out of the family, I should make but a slender

market of this close-fingered justice, whose covetousness would suffer no rogues to live but himself.

SCENE III.—*The* CONSTABLE'S *House.*

RAMBLE, CONSTANT.

RAMBLE. This little mistress of yours is the most dexterous politician, if that drunken poppy doth not disappoint us.

CONSTANT. Never fear him: he hath cunning enough; and there hath been so long a war in his head between wine and his senses that they now seem to have come to an agreement that he is never to be quite in them, nor ever quite out of them: his life is one continued scene of being half drunk.

RAMBLE. Well, as we can be of no further use in the affair, but must stay here and expect the issue; pr'ythee, tell me what hath become of you these three long years since you quitted the service of the East India Company and came over to England with Sotmore?

CONSTANT. Why, at my first return to England, the prospect of war was in every one's eye; and not only the reports of the people, but the augmentation of the troops assured us of its approach: upon which, I resolved to embark my small remains of fortune in the service of my country, and obtained the same commission on that occasion which I had enjoyed in the Indies. My history is not very full of adventures: I continued therein till the reduction, when I shared the fate of several unhappy brave fellows, and was sent a begging with a red coat on my back.

RAMBLE. It is the faculty of the cloth to be ragged.—— Red is as apt to be ragged, as white to be soiled. It is commonly the fate of our brave soldiers to bring home ragged clothes, as well as colours, and both are rewarded by Westminster Hall——the one is hung up in it, and the

other is locked up safe by an order from it; for, Heaven be praised! the gaols are always open hospitals for us.

CONSTANT. The only happiness which hath attended me since my return is my having contracted an intimacy with that young lady whom you saw here; which hath proceeded so far, that last night we had appointed to meet in order to our marriage: but, as I was just arrived at the place, a woman well dressed was attacked in the street by a ruffian. I immediately flying to her assistance, the fellow quitted her, and left me alone in the possession of the watch, who early this morning carried me before Justice Squeezum, and by him I was committed hither.

RAMBLE. What, did she appear against you?

CONSTANT. No; they said she was ill of some bruises she had received, but desired I might be kept in custody till the afternoon, at which time she would appear against me. But by what Hilaret hath told us, and by some methods which have been used to extort money from me, I am inclined to fancy it all a contrived piece of villainy of the justice, and not of the woman's, as I at first imagined.

RAMBLE. Be assured of it;——if there be roguery, the justice hath the chief part in it. But comfort yourself with the expectation of revenge; for I think he cannot possibly escape the net we have spread, unless the devil hath more gratitude than he is reported to have, and will assist his very good friend at a crisis.

CONSTANT. But what do you intend in England, where you have no friends?

RAMBLE. I know not yet whether I have or no. I left an old father here, and a rich one. He thought fit to turn me out of doors for some frolics, which it is probable, if he yet lives, he may have forgiven me by this. But what's become of him I know not; for I have not heard one word of him these ten years.

CONSTANT. I think you have been vastly careless in neglecting him so long.

RAMBLE. 'Tis as I have acted in all affairs of life; my thoughts have ever succeeded my actions: the consequence

hath caused me to reflect when it was too late. I never consulted on what I should do, but when I had done: as if my reason had her eyes behind, and could only see backwards.

SCENE IV.

RAMBLE, CONSTANT, STAFF.

STAFF. Here's a letter for your honour.

RAMBLE. [*Reads it.*] Ay, this is a letter, indeed!

CONSTANT. What is it?

RAMBLE. My freedom under a sign-manual from the queen of those regions.

CONSTANT. Explain.

RAMBLE. Then, sir, in plain English, without either trope or figure, it is a letter from the justice's wife, with an order to the constable for my liberty. [*Reads.*

"Sir, I was no sooner recovered of the fright which that unmannerly friend of yours occasioned, than I have performed my promise. You will find me at home: the constable hath orders by the bearer to acquit you."

Heaven send success for you! [*Kisses the letter.*] Thou art not now a diamond ingot of a justice, I fly to thy arms.

CONSTANT. Harkye! suppose you brought her to be a witness against him, and have take this letter of assignation for Wilmore; it will give your discovery

RAMBLE. An admirable thought! I fly to execute it. [*To* CONSTANT.] I hope when next we meet,

We both may say
We've been in a safer bay,
Where no more storms can make us more.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Tavern.*

SQUEEZUM, DRAWER.

SQUEEZUM. No woman been to inquire for Mr. Jones?

DRAWER. Sir, I know of none; but I'll ask at the bar, if you please.

SQUEEZUM. Do—and leave word, if any such comes, to show her up hither.—I have no reason to doubt her company, but I am impatient for it. I protest this woman hath revived the vigour of youth in me; sure, I must have over-reckoned my years!——I cannot be above forty-nine at the most.—I wish this dear girl was come.—I am afraid I did wrong in giving her those five shillings, in a purse worth above two shillings more, which who knows she may be spending on some bully, who will perhaps send another present to me in return.

SCENE VI.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET.

SQUEEZUM. Oh! are you come—you little, pretty, dear, sweet rogue!——I have been waiting for you these——these four hours at least.

HILARET. Young lovers are commonly earlier than their appointment.

SQUEEZUM. Give me a kiss for that.—Thou shalt find me a young lover, a vigorous young lover too.——Hit me a slap in the face, do——Bow-wow! Bow-wow! I'll eat up your clothes.——Come, what will you drink? White or red?——Women love white best.——Boy, bring half a pint of mountain.——Come, sit down; do, sit down.——Come, now let us hear the story how you were first debauched.—Come—that I may put it down in my history at home. I

have the history of all the women's ruin that ever I lay with, and I call it, THE HISTORY OF MY OWN TIMES.

HILARET. I'll warrant it is as big as a Church Bible.

SQUEEZUM. It is really of a good reputable size. I have done execution in my time.

HILARET. And may do execution still.

BOY. [*Without.*] Half a pint of mountain in the Lion, score.

SQUEEZUM. Well—But now let me have the history—Where did your amour begin?—at church, I warrant you. More amours begin at church than end there.—Or, perhaps, you went to see the man of war——Going to see sights hath ruined many a woman. No wonder children are lovers of them, since so many owe their being to them.

HILARET. [*Aside.*] I thank you for that remembrance, I had forgot my lover.——Ay, sir, it was there indeed I saw him first; that was the fatal scene of our interview.

SQUEEZUM. Well, and was the amour managed by letter, or by word of mouth?

HILARET. By letter, sir. I believe he writ two quires of paper to me before I would send him an answer: I returned him several unopened, and then several others opened —But at last he obtained an answer.

SQUEEZUM. Well, and after your answer, what followed then?

HILARET. Oh! he thought himself sure of me as soon as I had answered his letter.

SQUEEZUM. Ay, I have always observed in my amours that when I received an answer I never failed of the woman; a woman follows her letter infallibly. Well, and what did he say in the second letter?

HILARET. Oh! he swore a thousand fond things: that his love should last as long as his life: that his whole happiness depended on me——and a vast deal of that nature.

SQUEEZUM. Ay, ay, just as I have done myself. I find whoring is as methodical as the law.

HILARET. And I fancy as tedious with you, old gentleman. [*Aside.*



I mean to eat you up, to swallow you down, to squeeze you to pieces.

From an original painting by E. J. Read.



SQUEEZUM. Well, and how many letters did you write to him, ey!——before——

HILARET. Not many. He did not want much encouragement.

SQUEEZUM. Then, passing over the rest of the suit, let us come to the last fatal meeting.

HILARET. It was of a Sunday morning——

SQUEEZUM. Right. My old method: when other people are gone to church.

HILARET. In an exceeding hot day.——

SQUEEZUM. May or June?——Women and cherries are commonly gathered in the same month.

HILARET. I was fatigued with walking in the garden, and retired to an arbour to repose myself: guess what was my surprise when I found the dear perfidious had conveyed himself thither before me.

SQUEEZUM. A sly dog! My old way again. An ambush is as useful in love as war.

HILARET. At my first entrance he pretended a surprise at seeing me unexpectedly; but on my questioning him how and with what design he had conveyed himself there, he immediately threw off the cloak and confessed all: he flew to me, caught me in his arms with the most eager raptures, and swore the most violent love and eternal constancy. I in the greatest agony of rage repelled him with my utmost force; he redoubled his attacks, I slackened my resistance; he entreated, I raved; he sighed, I cried; he pressed, I swooned; he——

SQUEEZUM. Oh!—I can bear no longer, my angel! my paradise! my honeysuckle! my dove! my darling!

HILARET. What do you mean, sir?

SQUEEZUM. I mean to eat you up, to swallow you down, to squeeze you to pieces.

HILARET. Help there! a rape, a rape!

SCENE VII.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET, SOTMORE.

SOTMORE. Hey-day! what in the devil's name is here? ——Justice Squeezum ravishing a woman!

HILARET. Oh! for Heaven's sake, sir, assist a poor forlorn, hapless maid, whom this wicked man hath treacherously seduced.

SQUEEZUM. Oh lud!——Oh lud!

SOTMORE. Fie upon you, Mr. Squeezum; you who are a magistrate, you who are the preserver and executor of our laws, thus to be the breaker of them!

SQUEEZUM. Canst thou accuse me?

HILARET. You know too well how barbarously you have used me. For pity's sake, sir, secure him; do not let him escape, till we send for a constable. If there be any law for a justice, I am resolved to hang him.

SQUEEZUM. O lud; what shame have I brought myself to! that ever I should live to see this day!

SOTMORE. If thou hadst stood to thy bottle like an honest fellow this had never happened; but you must go a whoring, with a pox to you, at your years too; with these spindle shanks, that weezle face, that crane's neck of a body. Who would have imagined that such an old withered maypole as thou art should attempt to fall on a woman? Why thou wilt be the diversion of the whole town.—Grub Street will dine a month on your account. Thou wilt be ushered to Tyburn with more pomp than Alexander was ushered into Babylon. Justice never triumphs so universally as at the execution of one of her own officers.

SQUEEZUM. Sir, if there be truth on earth, I am as innocent——

SOTMORE. All the innocence on earth will not save you ——A man doth not always draw the rope by the weight of his sins. Your innocence will not acquit you in a court

of justice against her oath; and, when you come to the gallows, it will be vain to plead your innocence. All's fish that comes to the net there. The gallows so seldom gets its due, that it never parts with what it gets.

HILARET. Can you pretend to innocence? Was not this gentleman an eye-witness to your rudeness, to the injuries you offered me?

SOTMORE. Ay, ay, I can swear to the rape with as safe a conscience as I can drink a glass of wine.

SQUEEZUM. I see I am betrayed; I am caught in my own trap. There is but one way to escape, which is the way I have opened to others. [*Aside.*] I see, madam, your design is to extort money from me. I am too well acquainted with the laws to contend: I hope you will be reasonable, for I am poor, very poor, I assure you; it is not for men of my honesty to be rich.

HILARET. Sir, if you would give me millions, it should not satisfy my revenge! you shall be hanged for an example to others.

SQUEEZUM. Here's a cruel wretch! who prefers my blood to my gold, which is almost my blood.

SOTMORE. Hey-day! what vehicle is this? a vinegar bottle?——Half a pint, by Jupiter! Why, thou sneaking rascal, canst thou pretend to honesty, when this dram glass hath been found upon thee? Were I thy judge, or thy jury, this very sneaking vehicle should hang thee, without any other evidence. But come, since you are to be hanged, I'll drink one bumper to your good journey to the other world.—You will find abundance of your acquaintance, whom you have sent before you.—And now, I'll go call the drawer to fetch a constable.

SQUEEZUM. Hold, hold, sir; for mercy's sake do not expose me so.—Will nothing content you, madam?

HILARET. Nothing but the rigour of the law. Sir, I beseech you lose no time, but send for the constable immediately.

SQUEEZUM. I'll do any thing; I'll consent to any terms.

HILARET. The constable! the constable!

SQUEEZUM. Stay, dear sir; I'll give you a hundred guineas; I'll do any thing.

HILARET. Remember your vile commitment of two gentlemen this morning.—But I will revenge the injuries of my friends.—Sir, I beseech you send for the officers.

SQUEEZUM. One is already dismissed from his confinement, the other shall be dismissed immediately.

HILARET. It is too late.

SOTMORE. Harkye, sir, will you leave off whoring, and take to drinking for the future.

SQUEEZUM. I'll leave them off both.

SOTMORE. Then you shall be hanged: but if you will commence honest fellow, and get drunk every day of your life, I'll intercede with this lady, that, on your acquitting the gentleman, you shall be acquitted yourself.

SQUEEZUM. I'll do any thing, I'll quit any thing.

SOTMORE. Madam, let me persuade you to be merciful this time to this unfortunate and undutiful servant of justice.

HILARET. Sir, I can deny you nothing.

SQUEEZUM. Get me a pen and ink; I'll send an order to bring him hither, and discharge him instantly.

SOTMORE. Drawer, bring pen, ink, and paper, and a bottle of old port.

SQUEEZUM. [*To* Hilaret.] And could you have had the conscience to have sworn against a poor old man?

SOTMORE. Faith! 'twas a little cruel. Could you have had the heart to see him swinging like a gibbeted skeleton? Could you have served up such a dry dish to justice—— The body of one of her own children too?——But here's the paper.——Come, sir, write his discharge and your own.

[Squeezum *writes,* Sotmore *and* Hilaret *advance.*

SOTMORE. You have managed this matter so well, that I shall have an opinion of your sex's understanding ever after.

HILARET. Let a woman alone for a plot, Mr. Sotmore.

SOTMORE. Ay, madam, a woman that will drink a bumper. Wine is the fountain of thought: and

The more we drink,
The more we think.

It is a question with me, whether wine hath done more good, or physic harm, in the world: I would have every apothecary's shop in the town turned into a tavern.

HILARET. I am afraid, the more you have of the one, the more you will require of the other.

SOTMORE. It is their drugs that debauch our wine: Wine in itself is as innocent as water, and physic poisons both. It is not the juice of the grape, but of the drug, that is pernicious. Let me advise you, madam, leave off your damned adulterated water, your tea, and take to wine. It will paint your face better than vermilion, and put more honesty in your heart than all the sermons you can read. I'll introduce you to some clubs of my acquaintance, a set of honest fellows, that live in the clouds of tobacco, and know no home but a tavern.

SQUEEZUM. This letter, sir, will produce the gentleman immediately.

SOTMORE. Here, drawer——let this letter be sent whither it is directed. Come, honest justice, our acquaintance hath an odd beginning, but we may be very good companions soon. Let us sit down, and expect our friend in the manner it becometh us. Remember what you have bargained to do every day of your life, and the obligation shall be dated from this hour. Come, sit thee down, honest publican, old justice merchant. [*They sit.*] Here's a health to the propagation of trade, thy trade I mean, to the increase of whores, and false dice.—Thou art a collector of the customs of sin, and he that would sin with impunity must have thy permit. Come, pledge me, old boy; if thou leavest one drop in the glass thou shalt go to gaol yet, by this bottle!

SQUEEZUM. I protest, sir, your hand is too bountiful; you will overcome me with wine

SOTMORE. Well, and I love to see a magistrate drunk; it is a comely sight. When justice is drunk, she cannot take a bribe.

SQUEEZUM. Do you not remember how the Athenians punished drunkenness in a magistrate?

SOTMORE. And do not I know that we have no such Athenian law among us? We punish drunkenness, as well as other sins, only in the lower sort. Drink, like the game, was intended for gentlemen—and no one should get drunk who cannot go home in a coach—Come, madam, it is your glass now.

HILARET. Dear sir! I beg you would not compel me to it.

SOTMORE. By this bottle but I will; I'll ravish thee to it before the justice's face. Come, it will be better for you than tea; you will not be obliged to skulk away and take a dram after this. Come, drink the justice's health, as a token of amity; the justice is a good honest drunken fellow. But let me give you some wholesome advice. [*To the* Justice.] Leave off fornicating; leave the girls to the boys, and stand to thy bottle; it is a virtue becoming our years; and don't be too hard on a wild honest young rake. Thou hast committed a couple of the prettiest boys to-day; don't do so any more.—Be as severe as you please to whores and gamesters, that offer to act without your licence: but if ever you grant a warrant for a friend of mine again, you shall not only drink the wine, but eat the bottle too. Come, here's your health, in hopes of your amendment; thou shalt pledge thy own health, in a bumper.—Here, boy, bring up a gallon of wine.

SQUEEZUM. Not a drop more.

SOTMORE. A drop! confound the name. Come, empty your glass; the lady is a-dry.

SQUEEZUM. This is worse than a prison.

SOTMORE. You will get out of this with paying less fees. Drink, I say.

SQUEEZUM. Well—since I must.

SOTMORE. Come, we'll have a song in praise of drinking. —I'll sing the stanzas, and you shall bear the chorus.

SONG.

I.

Let a set of sober asses
Rail against the joys of drinking,
While water, tea,
And milk agree,
To set cold brains a thinking.
Power and wealth,
Beauty, health,
Wit and mirth in wine are crown'd;
Joys abound,
Pleasure's found,
Only where the glass goes round.

II.

The ancient sects on happiness
All differed in opinion,
But wiser rules
Of modern schools,
In wine fix her dominion.
Power and wealth, &c.

III.

Wine gives the lover vigour,
It maketh glow the cheeks of beauty,
Makes poets write,
And soldiers fight,
And friendship do its duty.
Power and wealth, &c.

IV.

Wine was the only Helicon,
Whence poets are long-lived so;

'Twas no other main
Than brisk champagne,
Whence Venus was derived too.
Power and wealth, &c.

V.

When Heaven in Pandora's box
All kind of ill had sent us,
In a merry mood,
A bottle of good
Was corked up to content us.
Power and wealth, &c.

VI.

All virtues wine is nurse to,
Of every vice destroyer;
Gives dullards wit,
Makes just the cit,
Truth forces from the lawyer.
Power and wealth, &c.

VII.

Wine sets our joys a flowing,
Our care and sorrow drowning,
Who rails at the bowl
Is a Turk in his soul,
And a Christian ne'er should own him.
Power and wealth, &c.

SCENE VIII.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET, SOTMORE, CONSTANT, STAFF.

CONSTANT. My Hilaret! my dear!
HILARET. My Constant!

SOTMORE. Give you joy, dear Constant, of your liberty.

CONSTANT. Thank you, dear Sotmore, to you I am partly obliged for it: Ramble and I will make you amends: we'll give you six nights for this.

SOTMORE. Where is he?

CONSTANT. Very safe; be not concerned about him.

HILARET. Well, sir, since our affair is ended, there is the purse you presented me this morning. As I have not performed your expectations one way I'll give you what I believe you did not expect—your money again. It is unopened, I assure you.

SQUEEZUM. Thou art welcome, however.

SOTMORE. Come, gentlemen, be pleased to take every man his chair and his glass; we will dedicate an hour or two to drinking, I am resolved.

SQUEEZUM. First we will sacrifice to justice. Mr. Constable, do your duty.

STAFF. Come in there.

SCENE IX.

SQUEEZUM, HILARET, SOTMORE, CONSTANT, STAFF, ASSISTANTS.

The Assistants *seize* Constant. Hilaret, *and* Sotmore.

SQUEEZUM. Seize those people in the king's name—I accuse that woman and that man of conspiring to swear a rape against me.

STAFF. It is in vain to contend, gentlemen.

HILARET. Oh, the villain!

SQUEEZUM. [*To* Sotmore.] The next letter you extort, sir, be sure to examine the contents.

SOTMORE. Thou rascal! will not even wine make thee honest?

SQUEEZUM. Observe, gentlemen, how abusive he is; but I'll make an example of you all: I'll prosecute you to the

utmost severity of the law.—Mr. Constable, convey the prisoners to your house, whence you shall have orders to bring them before a justice.

SOTMORE. And art thou really in earnest?

SQUEEZUM. You shall find I am, sir, to your cost.

SOTMORE. Then I have found one man with whom I would not drink a glass of wine.

STAFF. Come, gentlemen, you know the way to my house.—I am particularly glad to see your honour [*to* Sotmore], and will accommodate you in the best manner I can.

CONSTANT. I am too well acquainted with misfortune to repine at any; but how shall I bear yours, my Hilaret?

HILARET. The less you seem to bear, the more you will lighten mine.

SOTMORE. I must give the justice one wish. May Heaven rain small-beer upon thee, and may it corrupt thy body, till it is as putrefied as thy mind.

HILARET. One blessing only may Heaven leave thy life.
May it take all things from thee—but thy wife!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—POLITIC'S *House.*

POLITIC. [*Solus.*] Sure, never child inherited less of a father's disposition than mine; her mother certainly played me foul in the begetting her: I, who have been my whole life noted for sobriety, could never have given being to so wild a creature. I begin to recollect having seen a tall half-pay officer at my house formerly: nor do I think the girl unlike him. I am sure she hath ever been wild enough to have had any officer in the kingdom for her father. Nature hath been kind to the male of all creatures but man: the bull, the horse, the dog, are not encumbered even with their

own offspring: that care falls only to the females: but man, when once a gabbling priest hath chattered a few mischievous words over him, is bound to have and to hold from that day forward all the brats his wife is pleased to bestow on him. Yet I must own the girl hath been ever dutiful to me, till she became acquainted with this cursed fellow in a red coat. Why should red have such charms in the eyes of a woman? The Roman senate kept their armies abroad to prevent their sharing in their lands at home: we should do the same to prevent their sharing in our wives. A tall lusty fellow shall make more work for a midwife in one winter at home, than he can for a surgeon in ten summers abroad.

SCENE II.

POLITIC, FAITHFUL.

POLITIC. Well, any news of my daughter yet?

FAITHFUL. No, sir; but there is some news from the secretary's office; a mail is arrived from Holland, and you will have the contents of it in one of the evening papers.

POLITIC. Very well! I must be patient. I think we have three mails together now; I am not satisfied at all with the affairs in the north: the northern winds have not blown us any good lately; the clouds are a little darker in the east too than I could wish them.

SCENE III.

POLITIC, DABBLE.

POLITIC. Mr. Dabble, good morrow.

DABBLE. Are the mails come in?

POLITIC. Just arrived.

DABBLE. I have not slept one wink for reflecting on what

you told me last night; perhaps this Dutch mail may give some insight into those affairs. But what says the Lying Post?

POLITIC. I have had no time to read it yet, I wish you would. I have only read the London Journal, the Country Journal, the Weekly Journal, Applebee's Journal, the British Journal, the British Gazetteer, the Morning Post, the Coffee-House Morning Post, the Daily Post, the Daily Post Boy, the Daily Journal, the Daily Courant, the Gazette, the Evening Post, the Whitehall Evening Post, the London Evening Post, and the St. James's Evening Post. So, if you please, begin the Lying Post.

DABBLE. [*Reads.*] "Moscow, January the 5th. We learn from Constantinople, that affairs continue still in the same doubtful way: it is not yet known what course our court will take. The Empress having been slightly indisposed, the other day, took the air in her own coach, and returned so well recovered, that she ate a very hearty supper."

POLITIC. Hum!—There is no mention of the supper in any other papers.

DABBLE. "Berlin, January the 20th. We hear daily murmurs here concerning certain measures taken by a certain northern potentate; but cannot certainly learn either who that potentate is, or what are the measures which he hath taken—meantime, we are well assured, that time will bring them all to light."

POLITIC. Pray read that last over again.

DABBLE. "Meantime, we are well assured, that time will bring them all to light."

POLITIC. Hum! hum!

DABBLE. "Marseilles, January the 18th. The affairs in regard to Italy continue still in the same uncertain condition."

POLITIC. Hum!

DABBLE. "The talk of a large embarkation still runs high."

POLITIC. Hum!

DABBLE. "The Spaniards continue still encamped near Barcelona."

POLITIC. Hum! [*Shakes his head.*

DABBLE. "And every thing seems tending to a rupture—meantime we expect the return of a courier from Vienna, who 'tis generally expected will bring the news of a general pacification."

POLITIC. All is well again!

DABBLE. I like this, and some other papers, who disappoint you with good news. Where the beginning of a paragraph threatens you with war, the latter part of it ensures you peace.

POLITIC. Please to read on——

DABBLE. "However, notwithstanding these assurances, 'tis doubted by most people, whether the said courier will not rather bring a confirmation of the war; but this is all guess-work, and, till such time as we see an actual hostility committed, we must leave our readers in the same uncertain state we found them."

POLITIC. Hum! there is no certainty to be come at, I find; it may be either peace or war.

DABBLE. Though were I to lay a wager, I should choose war; for, if you observe, we are twice assured of that, whereas we have only one affirmation on the side of peace—but stay, perhaps the next paragraph, which is dated from Fontainbleau, may decide the question. "Fontainbleau, January the 23rd. Yesterday his Majesty went a hunting, to-day he hears an opera, and to-morrow he hears mass."

POLITIC. I don't like that; hearing mass is seldom the forerunner of good news.

DABBLE. "It is observable that Cardinal Fleury——"

POLITIC. Ay, now for it.

DABBLE. "It is observable that Cardinal Fleury hath, for several days last past, been in close conference with the minister of a certain state, which causes various speculations; but as we do not know what was the matter in debate, we cannot say what may be the consequence thereof. Meantime we cannot help observing that it hath occasioned some

people to put on very serene looks, who had worn cloudy ones for some time before: some imagine, on comparing this with the news from Marseilles, that a war will be unavoidable——others, who are more peaceably inclined, are as strenuous advocates on the other side.——We must refer the whole to the determination of Time, that great judge in worldly affairs, who never fails with his two-edged scythe to mow down the weeds which shadow over the secret counsels of state, and lay them open to the naked eye of the discerning politician."

POLITIC. Shall I beg to hear that over again?

SCENE IV.

POLITIC, DABBLE, FAITHFUL.

DABBLE. [*Reads.*] "We must refer the whole to the determination," &c. [Dabble *continues reading.*

FAITHFUL. Oh, sir, Cloris hath brought the strangest news of my young mistress.

POLITIC. Don't interrupt us——blockhead.

FAITHFUL. If you lose a moment, she may be lost for ever.

POLITIC. Sirrah! peace.

FAITHFUL. Sir, my young mistress, Miss Hilaret, will be undone, ruined, hanged, if you do not assist her; she's taken up for rape.—Oh! my poor young lady! the sweetest, best-tempered lady sure that ever was born. Oh! that ever I should see the day! And can you sit here, sir, reading a parcel of damned, confounded, lying nonsense, and not go to your daughter's assistance?

POLITIC. Sure the fellow is possessed.

FAITHFUL. Sir, your daughter is possessed—possessed by constables—she is taken up for a rape.

POLITIC. My daughter taken up for a rape!

FAITHFUL. Yes, sir; for ravishing a justice of peace.

POLITIC. Sure some accident has touched the fellow's brain.

FAITHFUL. Ay, sir, and it would touch yours too, if you had a grain of humanity in you—Oh! that I should live to see my poor young lady in such a misfortune!

POLITIC. A woman taken up for a rape——it is impossible.

FAITHFUL. They may swear it though for all that—I know her to be as modest a good young lady as any in the kingdom; but what will not a set of rogues swear. Sir, I lived with Squeezum before I lived with you; and know him to be as great a villain as any in the kingdom. Do, good sir, come with me to Justice Worthy's, if you do not find your daughter there, turn me away for a vagabond.

DABBLE. I do remember, neighbour Politic, to have seen in some newspaper a story not very different from this.

POLITIC. Nay, if you have seen it in a newspaper, it may probably have some truth in it; so, neighbour Dabble, you will excuse me; I will meet you within an hour at the coffee-house, and there we will confer farther.

SCENE V.—WORTHY'S *House.*

WORTHY, ISABELLA.

WORTHY. Sure modesty is quite banished from the age we live in. There was a time when virtue carried something of a divine awe with it, which no one durst attack; but now the insolence of our youth is such, no woman dare walk the streets, but those who do it for bread.

ISABELLA. And yet our laws, brother Worthy, are as rigorous as those of other countries, and as well executed.

WORTHY. That I wish they were; but golden sands too often clog the wheels of justice, and obstruct her course: the very riches, which were the greatest evidence of his villainy, have too often declared the guilty innocent; and gold

hath been found to cut a halter surer than the sharpest steel.

ISABELLA. Well, I am resolved to take care how I venture a step again after it is dark: I find the sun is the only guard to us women; for, however chaste the moon may be in herself, she takes but very little care of ours.

WORTHY. But could the villain be very rude?

ISABELLA. As rude as so short a time would permit. I would have given all I was worth in the world to have been here; but since I escaped, let us forget it.

WORTHY. Forget! by Heaven it shocks me; that we, who boast as wholesome laws as any kingdom upon earth, should, by the roguery of some of their executors, lose all their benefit. I long to see the time when here, as in Holland, the traveller may walk unmolested, and carry his riches openly with him.

SCENE VI.

WORTHY, ISABELLA, SQUEEZUM.

SQUEEZUM. Mr. Worthy, your humble servant. I come to wait on you on the strangest piece of business. We are brought to a fine pass indeed, when magistrates shall not be safe; we are like to protect others when we cannot protect ourselves.

WORTHY. What is the occasion of all this passion, Mr. Squeezum?

SQUEEZUM. Occasion! I have scarce power to tell you. I have discovered one of the most damnable conspiracies that hath been invented since the gunpowder treason plot.

WORTHY. Nothing against the government, I hope?

SQUEEZUM. Marry, but it is; for that which is against the officers of the government, is against the government. In short, sir, it is a conspiracy against me, against myself. What do you think, brother Worthy, but that, moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, a vile woman hath conspired to swear a rape against me?

WORTHY. A rape against you! foolish jade! Why, your very face would acquit you——you have innocence in your looks, brother Squeezum.

SQUEEZUM. I hope my character will acquit me against such an accusation.

WORTHY. I think it ought; a man, whose character would not, is very unfit for that honourable commission you bear.

SQUEEZUM. True! these slurs reflect on us all. The accusing a member is accusing the body. We should consider it may be our own case. We should stand by one another, as the lawyers do. I hope, brother, you will show me extraordinary justice; and I assure you, should any affair of yours come before me, my partiality shall lean on your side.

WORTHY. Partiality, sir! I hope no cause of mine ever will require it. I assure you I shall do the strictest justice; I believe you will not need more.

SQUEEZUM. Sir, my case needs no more; but I think it incumbent on us all to discountenance any prosecution of ourselves on any account whatsoever.

WORTHY. To discountenance it by the innocence of our lives is indeed laudable, but no farther. It is a cursed law which exempts the maker or the executor of it from its penalty.

SQUEEZUM. Truly, brother Worthy, I think the makers of laws, and the executors of them, should be free of them; as authors and actors are free of the playhouse.

WORTHY. You are ludicrous, Mr. Squeezum. But let me tell you he is the greatest of villains, who hath the impudence to hold the sword of justice while he deserves its edge.

SQUEEZUM. And let me tell you brother Worthy, he is the greatest of fools who holds the sword of justice and hurts himself with it.

ISABELLA. Brother, your servant; my presence will be very little necessary at this trial.

SCENE VII.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, CONSTANT, HILARET, STAFF, SOTMORE, BRAZENCOURT, FIREBALL, THREE ASSISTANTS.

SQUEEZUM. But here come the prisoners.—Brother Worthy, this is the woman whom I accuse of this detestable fact;—the manner of it was this: I received a letter in an unknown hand, appointing me to meet at a tavern, which out of pure good nature I complied with; and upon my arrival found that woman there alone, who, after a short discourse, laid hold of me, and bawled out; on which that man there entered, and both threatened me, that unless I immediately discharged that man [*points to* Constant] with another whom I had committed for notorious crimes, that the woman should swear a rape against me.—This I am ready to swear.

THREE ASSISTANTS. And we are ready to swear.

WORTHY. What do you say, young woman, to this? You do not look like one whom I should suspect of such behaviour.

HILARET. That I did threaten him, as he says, indeed I confess.

WORTHY. But did he attempt any such thing?

HILARET. I can't say he did, but——

SQUEEZUM. Do you hear this, brother Worthy? I think you have nothing to do but to make her mittimus.

WORTHY. And for what reason did you offer this?

HILARET. I offered it only to frighten him to the discharge of two gentlemen, whom he had villainously committed to the custody of that constable.

WORTHY. For what crimes do they stand committed, Mr. Constable?

STAFF. For two rapes, an't please your worship.

HILARET. One of them on my account,—though I never swore the least thing against him.

WORTHY. On your account,—I begin to be afraid he was unjustly committed indeed.

SQUEEZUM. Now, sir, we shall proceed to blacken a little the character of this woman. Call Mr. Brazencourt. Mr. Brazencourt, what do you know of this fine lady?

BRAZENCOURT. I know nothing more of her than that I kept her half a year.

WORTHY. Kept her——in what capacity did you keep her?

BRAZENCOURT. In the capacity of a whore, till I was obliged to turn her off for stealing four of my shirts, two pair of stockings, and my Common Prayer Book.

SQUEEZUM. Call Captain Fireball.

WORTHY. Captain Fireball, pray do you know any harm of that person there?

FIREBALL. Harm of her! ay, and so doth my surgeon too. She came to me from Major Brazencourt. I kept her two months.

HILARET. Sir, I beseech you hear me.

WORTHY. By and by. You must not interrupt them.—Go on. Did you lose any thing by her too?

FIREBALL. No, but I got something by her, which made my surgeon get something by me—I love to express myself in modest terms, but I believe you all know what I mean.

SQUEEZUM. Call Mr. Drury. We shall blacken her farther presently.

WORTHY. Indeed, you need not; let us hear no more; for her sake, I will never put confidence in an innocent countenance again.—Well, woman, can you say any thing for yourself?

HILARET. O that I could hide myself for ever from the world, and never from this hour behold the sun again!

WORTHY. Indeed, but you shall, madam, and be beheld by others too.

CONSTANT. Come to my bosom, thou dearest, sweetest, loveliest; hide thy sorrows there.—Death only shall tear thee from my arms again. Death! hell itself cannot have a torment equal to seeing one tear of thine.

SOTMORE. Harkye, justice, I believe thou art honester than thy brother; I am sure thou canst not be a greater rogue: if thou wilt act the right part, acquit us, and send that villain to prison.

SCENE VIII.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, CONSTANT, HILARET, SOTMORE, STAFF, CONSTABLES, ASSISTANTS, POLITIC, FAITHFUL, CLORIS.

FAITHFUL. Now, sir, will you believe your own eyes?—Is not that your own daughter?

POLITIC. It is, indeed.—Oh! my unfortunate child—

WORTHY. Mr. Politic, your humble servant—I will but commit this woman to gaol, and then I will be at your command.

POLITIC. Sir, you shall not be my humble servant, nor will I be yours; and if you commit my daughter to prison you are the worst of Turks.

WORTHY. Your daughter, sir!

POLITIC. Yes, sir, my daughter, sir.

HILARET. Oh! my father!

POLITIC. My poor child!——That ever I should live to see thee in such a misfortune!

WORTHY. Is it possible, Mr. Politic, that this young lady is your daughter?

POLITIC. Yes, sir, it is as possible, as that the Turks may come into our part of Europe; and I wish this may not be as sure as that.

SCENE IX.

WORTHY, SQUEEZUM, CONSTANT, HILARET, STAFF, CONSTABLES, ASSISTANTS, POLITIC, FAITHFUL, SOTMORE, CLORIS, RAMBLE, MRS. SQUEEZUM, QUILL.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Where is this glory of the bench? this gallant justice, this terror and example of sin? Do you

know this hand, sir? Did you write this assignation? You are a noble gentleman truly, to make an appointment with a fine lady, and then bring her before a magistrate.

SQUEEZUM. O my malignant stars!

WORTHY. Mrs. Squeezum, what is the matter?

MRS. SQUEEZUM. You, Mr. Worthy, I am sure will pity one who hath the misfortune to be married to a man who is as much a scandal to the commission he bears, as you are an honour to it; my conscience hath been too long burdened with conniving at his rogueries. He, sir, he alone is guilty, and every one whom he hath accused is innocent.

WORTHY. I know not what to think!

RAMBLE. Sir, that fellow there, that butcher of justice, is the greatest villain that ever was born.—Being a little frolicsome last night with this lady, that constable seized us. 'Tis to me she is indebted for all this trouble; though Mr. Constable may claim some share in not suffering us to depart at her desire.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. And Mr. Justice may claim a little, who committed you to the constable's house without any evidence, or even accusation.

RAMBLE. That he might extort two hundred pounds, for which sum he offered to compromise the matter.

SQUEEZUM. Harkye, madam, I shall be obliged to commit you to Bedlam.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. No, sir, I shall prevent you in that, as well as in your other designs; your plot with Mr. Quill, which the whole world shall know; you shall be divorced, sir, though not the way you desire.

SQUEEZUM. Sir, I beseech you to hear no more.

WORTHY. That, sir, I cannot grant.

RAMBLE. Sir, I desire that you would read that letter, which he sent to this young lady whom he hath accused.

WORTHY. [*Reads.*] "My little honeysuckle, I will meet you within this half-hour at the Eagle. I hope, after what you have received from me to-day, you will not disappoint yours till then and ever after."———Did you write this letter, Mr. Squeezum?

SQUEEZUM. No, sir, as I am ready to swear.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. Sir, I will swear it to be his hand—

FAITHFUL. And so will I—I lived with him a twelvemonth, and therefore should know it.

QUILL. And I carried it to the lady.

SOTMORE. Come, come, justice, thou hast proof enough of her innocence. I will give you the word of a man of honour, which is more than the oaths of twenty such scoundrels as these, that she never intended more than to frighten him to the acquittal of Captain Constant here, whom he had unjustly committed.

CONSTANT. And offered to acquit for a sum of money.

WORTHY. Captain Constant? is your name Constant, sir?

CONSTANT. At your service.

WORTHY. Desire my sister to walk hither—I am more obliged to you than you know.

SQUEEZUM. Come, sir, this is only losing time——I want the mittimus.

SCENE X.

WORTHY. SQUEEZUM, RAMBLE, CONSTANT, SOTMORE, HILARET, POLITIC, MRS. SQUEEZUM, QUILL, STAFF, FAITHFUL, &C., ISABELLA.

WORTHY. Sister, do you know this gentleman?

ISABELLA. Captain Constant. It is happy for me that I do——I thank you, sir, for your generous rescue last night, which my fright at that time prevented my acknowledging.

CONSTANT. And was it you, madam?

RAMBLE. My Isabella!

ISABELLA. Ha!——it is, it is my Ramble——

RAMBLE. My touch deceives me not, it is my charming she, once more restored to my despairing hopes.

ISABELLA. What lucky stars can have contrived this interview?

RAMBLE. Very lucky stars they appear now; but they had a confounded ugly aspect some time ago.

ISABELLA. Surprising! Brother, let that fellow be secured. He was the person from whose hands this gentleman delivered me. [*To* Fireball.

QUILL. I hope your worship will forgive me; but I hired these two men, by my master's command, to be evidences for him.

WORTHY. Surprising villainy!——secure them instantly. And particularly that justice,——whom I shall no longer treat as a gentleman, but as his villainy hath merited.—Constable, I charge you with them all—and let them be kept below in the parlour, whither I will come immediately and sign their commitment.

SQUEEZUM. Sir, you shall wish you had dealt more favourably with me.

WORTHY. Sir, your threatenings will not terrify me.

FAITHFUL. Come, gentlemen, we'll be your safeguard.

MRS. SQUEEZUM. I'll follow thee, like thy evil genius, till I have brought thee to that justice thou deservest.

SCENE *the last.*

WORTHY, RAMBLE, CONSTANT, SOTMORE, HILARET. ISABELLA, POLITIC.

RAMBLE. My dear Isabella, I am so overjoyed at this unexpected meeting, that I do not ask for the safety of our treasure. Since the sea hath refunded Isabella, let it take the jewels.

ISABELLA. The sea hath been even kinder than your wish, it hath returned you both.

RAMBLE. I should soon have forgotten that loss in having Isabella; yet, for her sake, the treasure is welcome too.

WORTHY. Mr. Politic, I am heartily concerned at this misfortune which hath befallen your daughter.

RAMBLE. Mr. Politic!—By Heavens, his features are the same. Had you not a son, sir, once?

POLITIC. Yes, sir, I had; but I turned him out of doors, and believe he was hanged long ago.

RAMBLE. Then I am his ghost, just arrived from the Indies. When you turned me out of doors I got admitted into the East India Company's service; I changed my name in order to escape your discovery——and I hope you will now give us both your blessing.

POLITIC. And are you really that wild fellow my son?

RAMBLE. I am that very identical wild person, I assure you.

POLITIC. I don't know whether I'll give you my blessing or no, till I see how you are married.

WORTHY. Mr. Politic, I rejoice in the union of our families; this lady, your son's wife, is my sister—and if fourscore thousand pounds can make the match agreeable to you, it will be so.

POLITIC. Hath the wild rogue made his fortune at last! Well, son, I give you my blessing; and my dear daughter, I give you joy, and I hope the boy will give it you, ay, and lasting and constant joy.—If he doth not make you a good husband, I'll not own him: if he doth not make you blessed, he shall have no blessing of mine.

ISABELLA. Sir, I doubt him not.

RAMBLE. Well, father, I have nothing more to ask of you, but in favour of my friend Captain Constant, whose love I am certain will complete the happiness of my sister.

WORTHY. I think I have never been witness to such a complication of villainy. Sir [*to* Constant], I assure you, and all of you, you shall have sufficient reparation for the injuries you have suffered. And, sir, by the character which I have had from my sister of that gentleman, I do not think your daughter can be better disposed of, let the difference of fortune be what it please.

RAMBLE. Besides, though his estate be not equal now, it may become so; for no man hath a better insight into politics.

POLITIC. Nay, if his studies bend that way, no man indeed can tell to what his estate may come.——Had I known this sooner, my doors should never have been shut against him. Sir, I shall be glad to confabulate with you at my house—and, if you should set your heart on my daughter, I do not believe I shall do any thing to break it.

RAMBLE. Nay, sir, there is no hour like the present; this hour hath proved lucky to your family.—Give me leave to present your daughter to one, whom, if she deserves, I shall be proud of calling her sister.

CONSTANT. Ramble, you have crowned my obligations with a gift far dearer than the earth could prove.

HILARET. I only wish you may always think so, captain. And now, papa, I hope you will pardon this night's sally to both me and poor Cloris; we have been already sufficiently punished; and since the event is happy, imitate in this one thing the Turks, and consider it favourably, as it hath been prosperous.

POLITIC. The Turks! I wish you were better acquainted with them than in romances; I hope that gentleman will take care to instruct you in public affairs.——Well, Jack [*to* Ramble], I long to have some communication with you about the affairs in the Indies, and the posture of our trade there——I hope you left the Great Mogul in good health——

RAMBLE. Very slightly indisposed of a cold at my departure.

POLITIC. I heartily forgive you all: so let me see you all embrace one another.——This is the comfort of age, Mr. Worthy.

SOTMORE. Let me embrace you all together.—I have found this day two good women—and they have fallen to the share of my friends—and I will get drunk this night, if the spirit of wine will do it—I'll drink to your happiness, while you are enjoying it.—While you are tasting the joys of Venus, I will swallow down the delights of Bacchus.—I despair of either of your company this month yet——but the justice shall celebrate this night with me.—Come, honest justice—I have found one honest justice too.

WORTHY. Really, sir, I think you have sufficiently celebrated already.

SOTMORE. No, but I have not——And you, sir, will be drunk at your children's wedding-night.

POLITIC. I never drink any thing but coffee, sir.

SOTMORE. Damn your coffee——

RAMBLE. Sotmore, thou shalt have justice——Mr. Worthy, I assure you, notwithstanding this humour, the world hath not an honester man.

WORTHY. It is pity he should besot himself so. Your character of him encourages me to employ some labour in advising him to quit so beastly a pleasure. Come, gentlemen, I desire you would celebrate this day at my house. To-morrow, I will proceed to take all possible measures to your receiving satisfaction for your injuries, and making public example of so great a villain: for the crimes of a magistrate give the greatest sanction to sin.

No reverence that church or state attends
Whose laws the priest or magistrate offends.

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MRS. YOUNGER

At length the dreadful hurricane is ended,
And I and spouse are safe together landed.
For after all this mighty fuss about it,
Our play hath ended modestly without it.
But, ladies, did not you too sympathise?
Hey, pray, confess, do all your frowns arise
Because so much of Rape and Rape we bawl?
Or is it, that we have no Rape at all?

Indeed, our Poet, to oblige the age,
Had brought a dreadful scene upon the stage:
But I, perceiving what his Muse would drive at,
Told him the ladies never would connive at
A downright actual Rape——unless in private.
But notwithstanding what these poets tell us,
Who'd think our beaus were such high-mettled fellows?

Oh! may our youth, whose vigour is so parlous,
To Italy be wafted with Don Carlos:
There should one victory but give them scope,
They would not leave one maidenhead for the Pope;
Or should some new pope Joan the chair possess,
They'd play the devil with her——holiness.
No nunnery one virgin should enclose,
But new Rome fall by what the old arose.

'Twas a strange doctrine that Lucretia taught,
When on herself revenged her lover's fault!
Heathenish wretch! The pious Christian wife,
Though ravish'd, still contents herself with life:

So zealous from self-murder we refrain,
We live, though sure of ravishing again.

But may no fears of such a fate affright
The beauteous kind spectators of to-night!
Safe to your husband's arms may you escape,
And never know that dreadful thing, a Rape!

THE LETTER WRITERS;

OR, A

NEW WAY TO KEEP A WIFE AT HOME

A FARCE IN THREE ACTS

FIRST ACTED IN 1731

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

RAKEL	*Mr. Lacy.*
COMMONS	*Mr. Mullart.*
MR. WISDOM	*Mr. Jones.*
MR. SOFTLY	*Mr. Hallam.*
RISQUE	*Mr. Reynhold.*
JOHN	*Mr. Wathan.*
SNEAKSBY	*Mr. Davenport.*

WOMEN

MRS. WISDOM	*Mrs. Lacy.*
MRS. SOFTLY	*Mrs. Mullart.*
BETTY	*Mrs. Stokes.*

Constable, Whores, Fiddlers, Servants, &c.

SCENE.—THE STREET

A NEW WAY

TO

KEEP A WIFE AT HOME

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

RAKEL, RISQUE.

RAKEL. [*Reading a letter.*]

"Sir,—Your late behaviour hath determined me never to see you more; if you get entrance into this house for the future, it will not be by my consent: for I desire you would henceforth imagine there never was any acquaintance between you and LUCRETIA SOFTLY."

So! the letter was thrown out of the window, was it?

RISQUE. Ay, sir, I am sure there is no good news in it by the face of that jade Susan. I know by the countenance of the maid when the mistress is in good humour.

RAKEL. Well, may you meet with better success in the next expedition. Here, carry this letter to Mrs. Wisdom, I'll wait here till you return with an answer.

RISQUE. But, sir——

RAKEL. Well, sir?

RISQUE. This affair, sir, may end in a blanketing, and that is a danger I never love to run with an empty stomach.

RAKEL. Sirrah; if I were to be tossed myself I would wish to be as empty as possible; but thou art such an epicure, thou art continually thinking on thy belly.

RISQUE. The reason of that is very plain, sir; for I am continually hungry. Whilst I followed your honour's heels as a soldier I expected no better fare; but, since I have been promoted to the office of pimp, I ought to live in another manner. Would it not vex a man to the heart to run about gnawing his nails like a starved skeleton, and see every day so many plump brethren of the same profession riding in their coaches?

RAKEL. Bring me but an answer to my wish, and then——

RISQUE. Don't promise me, sir——for then I shall be sure of having nothing.——If you were but as like a great man in your riches as you are in your promises, I should dine oftener by two or three days a week than I do now.

RAKEL. To your business. It is happy for the nation that this fellow ran away from his master; for, had he become an authorised attorney, he would have been a greater burden to the town he was quartered on than our whole regiment.

SCENE II.

RAKEL, COMMONS

COMMONS. Captain Rakel, your servant.

RAKEL. Jack Commons!——My dear rake, welcome to town: how do all our friends at quarters?

COMMONS. All in the old way. I left your two brother officers with two parsons and the mayor of the town as drunk as your drums.

RAKEL. Mr. Mayor, indeed, is a thorough honest fellow; and hath not, I believe, been sober since he was in the chair; he encourages that virtue as a magistrate, which he lives by as a publican.

COMMONS. Very fine, faith! and if the mayor was a glazier, I suppose he would encourage breaking windows too.

RAKEL. But prithee, what hath brought thee to town?

COMMONS. My own inclinations chiefly. I resolved to take one swing in the charming plains of iniquity; so I am come to take my leave of this delicious lewd place, of all the rakes and whores of my acquaintance,——to spend one happy month in the joys of wine and women, and then sneak down into the country, and go into orders.

RAKEL. Ha, ha, ha! And hast thou the impudence to pretend to a call?

COMMONS. Ay, sir; the usual call; I have the promise of a good living. Lookee, captain, my call of piety is much the same as yours of honour.—You will fight, and I shall pray, for the same reasons, I assure you.

RAKEL. If thy gown doth not rob thee of sincerity, thou wilt have one virtue under it at least.

COMMONS. Ay, ay, sincerity is all that can be expected; that is the chief difference among men. All men have sins; but some hide them. Vice is as natural to us as our skins, and both would equally appear, if we had neither clothes nor hypocrisy to cover them.

RAKEL. Thou art a fine promising holder forth, faith, and dost begin to preach in a most orthodox manner.

COMMONS. Pox of preaching! will you go steal an act or two of the new tragedy?

RAKEL. Not I——I go to no tragedy——but the tragedy of Tom Thumb.

COMMONS. The tragedy of Tom Thumb! what the devil is that?

RAKEL. Why, sir, it is a tragedy that makes me laugh: and, if your sermons will do as much, I shall be glad to make one of your audience.

COMMONS. Will you go to the tavern?

RAKEL. No, I am engaged.

COMMONS. Engaged; then it must be to a bawdy-house, and I'll along with you.

RAKEL. Indeed, you cannot, my young Levite; for mine

is a private bawdy-house, and you will not be admitted, even though you had your gown on.

COMMONS. If thy engagement be not pressing, thou shalt go along with me: I will introduce thee to a charming fine girl, a relation of mine.

RAKEL. Dost thou think me dull enough to undergo the ceremonies of being introduced by a relation to a modest woman?—Hast thou a mind to marry me to her?

COMMONS. No, sir, she is married already.—There are a brace of them, as fine women as you have seen, and both married to old husbands.

RAKEL. Nay, then they are worth my acquaintance, and some other time thou shalt introduce me to them.

COMMONS. Nay, thou shalt go drink tea with one of them now—It is but just by—I dined there to-day, and my uncle is now gone abroad. Come, 'tis but two steps into the square here, at the first two lamps.

RAKEL. The first two lamps!

COMMONS. Ay, no farther——Her husband's name is Wisdom.

RAKEL. By all that's unlucky, the very woman I have sent Risque to! [*Aside.*

COMMONS. Come, we'll go make her a visit now, and to-morrow I'll carry thee to my aunt Softly.

RAKEL. Another mistress of mine, by Lucifer. [*Aside.* Hast thou no more female relations in town?

COMMONS. No more! Won't two serve your unreasonable appetite?

RAKEL. But thou seemest to be so free of them, I could wish thee, for the sake of the public, related to all the beauties in Christendom. But, Jack, I hope these two aunts of thine are not rigidly virtuous?

COMMONS. Ha, ha, ha!—Do not I tell thee they are young and handsome, and that their husbands are old?

RAKEL. And thou wouldst not take it amiss if one were to dub an uncle of thine a cuckold?

COMMONS. Harkye, Tom, if thou hadst read as much as I, thou wouldst know that cuckold is no such term of

reproach as it is imagined: half the great men in history are cuckolds on record. Take it amiss! ha, ha, ha! Why, my uncle himself will not; for the whole world knows he is a cuckold already.

RAKEL. How?

COMMONS. Ay, sir, when an old man goes publicly to church with a young woman he proclaims that title loud enough. But come, will you to my aunt?

RAKEL. You must excuse me now.

COMMONS. When I make you such another offer, you sha'n't refuse it: I thought you would have postponed any business for a mistress.

RAKEL. But I am in pursuit of another mistress, one I am pre-engaged to.—Afterwards, sir, I am at the service of your whole family.

COMMONS. Success attend your iniquity.—I'll inquire for you at the Tilt Yard. So, your servant.

RAKEL. Yours.—A very pretty fellow this—I find, if he should discover my amours, he is not likely to be any obstacle to them.

SCENE III.

RAKEL, RISQUE.

RAKEL. So, sir.

RISQUE. Sir, I have with great dexterity delivered your honour's letter, and with equal pleasure have brought you an answer.

RAKEL. [*Reads.*]

"Be here at the time you mention; my husband is luckily out of the way. I wish your happiness be (as you say) entirely in the power of "ELIZABETH WISDOM."

Ay, now thou hast performed well indeed, and I'll give thee all the money I have in my pocket for an encouragement. Odso! I have but sixpence about me—here, take, take this and be diligent.

RISQUE. Very fine encouragement truly! This it is to serve a poor, beggarly, lousy——If half this dexterity had been employed in the service of a great man, I had been a captain or a Middlesex justice long ago—But I must tug along the empty portmanteau of this shabby no-pay ensign. Pox on't, what can a man expect who is but the rag-carrier of a rag-carrier?

SCENE IV.

MRS. WISDOM, RAKEL.

MRS. WISDOM. Sure never any thing was so lucky for us as this threatening letter: while my husband imagined I should go abroad, he was almost continually at home; but now he thinks himself secure of my not venturing out, he is scarce ever with me.

RAKEL. How shall I requite this goodness, which can make such a confinement easy for my sake?

MRS. WISDOM. The woman that thinks it worth her while to confine herself for her gallant thinks herself sufficiently requited by his company.

BETTY. [*Entering.*] Oh! madam, here's my master come home: had he not quarrelled with the footman at the door he had certainly found you together.

RAKEL. What shall I do?

MRS. WISDOM. Step into this closet—quick, quick, what can have sent him home so soon?

SCENE V.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM.

MRS. WISDOM. Oh! my dear! you are better than your word now; this is kind indeed, to return so much earlier than your promise.

MR. WISDOM. Mr. Mortgageland hath disappointed me: I'm afraid somebody else hath taken him off my hands: so let some of the servants get me my nightgown and slippers, for I intend to stay at home all the evening.

MRS. WISDOM. Was ever such ill-luck—they are both in my closet.——Lord, child, why will you put on that odious nightgown; indeed, it doth not become you—you don't look pretty in it, lovey, indeed you don't.

MR. WISDOM. Pshaw! it doth not become a wife to dislike her husband in any dress whatsoever.

MRS. WISDOM. Well, my dear, if you command, I will be always ready to obey.—Betty, go fetch your master's nightgown out of my closet.—Take care you don't open the door too wide, lest you throw down a china basin that is just within it.

MR. WISDOM. Come, give me a kiss; you look very pretty to-night, you little wanton rogue.—Adod! I shall, I shall make thee amends for the pleasures you miss abroad.

MRS. WISDOM. So you won't put the money where the rogues order you, and you'll have your poor wife murdered to save twenty guineas.

MR. WISDOM. If you stay at home, you will not be murdered, and I shall save many a twenty guineas.

MRS. WISDOM. But then, I shall lose all my acquaintance by not returning their visits.

MR. WISDOM. Then I shall lose all my torments: and truly, if I owe this loss to the letter-writer, I am very much obliged to him. I would have tied a much larger purse to the knocker of my door to have kept it free from that rat-tat-tat-tat-tat, which continually thundered at it.

SCENE VI.

MR. SOFTLY, MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM.

MR. SOFTLY. Mr. Wisdom, your servant; madam, I am your humble servant: a friend of yours, Mr. Wisdom, expects you at Tom's.

MR. WISDOM. Nay, if he be come, I must leave thee for one hour, my dear. So, take the key of my closet, and fetch me that bundle of parchment that lies in the bureau.

MRS. WISDOM. I will, my dear.— (This is extremely lucky.) [*Aside.*

SCENE VII.

MR. WISDOM, MR. SOFTLY.

MR. SOFTLY. Well: doth the plot succeed notably?

MR. WISDOM. To my wish. She hath not ventured to stir abroad since. This demand you have drawn upon my wife for twenty pound will be of more service to me than a draught on the bank for so many hundreds.

MR. SOFTLY. I wish your threatening letter to my wife had met with the same success: but alack! it hath a quite contrary effect. She swears she'll go abroad the more now to show her courage: but, that she may not appear too rash, she hath put me to the expense of an additional footman; and, instead of staying at home, she carries all my blunderbusses abroad.——Her coach, when she goes a visiting, looks like a general officer's going to a campaign.

MR. WISDOM. But if it came to that extremity I would lock up my doors, and shut her in, on pretence of shutting rogues out.

MR. SOFTLY. But I cannot shut her companions out: I should have a regiment of women on my back for ill-using my wife, and have a sentence of cuckoldom pronounced against me at all the assemblies and visiting days in town. If I could prevail by stratagem; well: but I am too certain of the enemy's strength to attempt the subduing her by force.

MR. WISDOM. Thank my stars, my wife is of another temper.

MR. SOFTLY. You will not take it ill, brother Wisdom: but your wife is not a woman of that spirit as mine is.

MR. WISDOM. No, Heaven be praised; for of all evil spirits that of a woman is surely the worst.

MR. SOFTLY. Truly, it is a perfection that costs a man as much as it is worth.

MR. WISDOM. But what do you intend to do?

MR. SOFTLY. I know not. Something I must; for my house at present is like a garrison; I have continually guards mounting and dismounting, while I know no enemy but my wife, and she's within.

SCENE VIII.

MR. SOFTLY, MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM.

MRS. WISDOM. Here are the parchments, my dear.

MR. WISDOM. You know the necessity of my engagement, and will excuse me.

MR. SOFTLY. No ceremony with me, brother.

MR. WISDOM. If you will stay with my wife till my return, she will be much obliged to you: you may entertain one another at picquet; you are no high player any more than she.

MRS. WISDOM. I shall be too hard for him; for I fancy he is a player much about your pitch, and you know I always get the better of you.

MR. WISDOM. Well, well, to it, to it. I leave you together.

SCENE IX.

MR. SOFTLY, MRS. WISDOM.

MR. SOFTLY. I am but a bad player, madam; but to divert you—

MRS. WISDOM. (How shall I get rid of him?)—I am not much inclined to picquet at present, Mr. Softly.

MR. SOFTLY. Hum! very likely! any other game that you please——if I can play at it.

MRS. WISDOM. No, you can't play at it——for to be plain, I am obliged to write a letter into the country. I hope you'll excuse me.

MR. SOFTLY. Oh! dear sister! I will divert the time with one of these newspapers: ay, here's the Grub Street Journal —An exceeding good paper this; and hath commonly a great deal of wit in it.

MRS. WISDOM. ——But——I am the worst person in the world at writing: the least noise disturbs me.

MR. SOFTLY. I am as mute as a fish.

MRS. WISDOM. I know not how to express it, I am so ashamed of the humour——But I cannot write whilst any one is in the room.

MR. SOFTLY. Hum! very probable! there is no accounting for some humours—Well, you may trust me in the closet. This closet and I have been acquainted before now.

[*Offers to go in.*

MRS. WISDOM. By no means, I have a thing in that closet you must not see.

SCENE X.

MR. SOFTLY, MRS. WISDOM, COMMONS.

COMMONS. What, is not my uncle Wisdom returned yet?

MRS. WISDOM. I am surprised you should return, sir, unless you have learnt more civility than you showed at dinner to-day; your behaviour then seemed very unfit for one who intends to put on that sacred habit you are designed for.

COMMONS. You may be as scurrilous as you please, aunt: it hath been always my resolution to see my relations as seldom as I can; and when I do see them never to mind what they say.—I have been at your house too, Uncle Softly, and have met with just such another reception there: but come, you and I will go drink one honest bottle

together—I have not cracked a bottle with you since I came to town.

MRS. WISDOM. For Heaven's sake, dear brother, do any thing to get him hence.

MR. SOFTLY. Well, nephew, as far as a pint goes.

COMMONS. Ay, ay, a pint is the best introduction to a bottle.—Aunt, will you go with us?

MRS. WISDOM. Faugh! brute!

COMMONS. If you won't, you may let it alone.

MR. SOFTLY. Sister, your humble servant.

MRS. WISDOM. I'll take care to prevent all danger of a surprise [*locks the door*]—there.—Captain, captain, you may come out, the coast is clear.

SCENE XI.

MRS. WISDOM, RAKEL.

RAKEL. These husbands make the most confounded long visits.

MRS. WISDOM. Husbands! why I have had half a dozen visitants since he went away; I thought you had overheard us.

RAKEL. Not I, truly; I have been entertaining myself with the Whole Duty of Man, at the other end of the closet.

MRS. WISDOM. You are very unconcerned in danger, captain.

RAKEL. Yes, madam, danger is my profession; and these sort of dangers are so common to me, that they give me no surprise. I have declared war with the whole commonwealth of husbands ever since I arrived at years of discretion.

MRS. WISDOM. Rather with the wives, I'm afraid.

RAKEL. No, madam; I always consider the wife as the town, and the husband as the enemy in possession of it. I am not for burning nor razing where I go; but when I have

driven the enemy out of his fortress, I march in, in the most gentle, peaceable manner imaginable. So, madam, if you please, we will walk into the closet together.

MRS. WISDOM. What, to read the Whole Duty of Man? Ha, ha, ha!

RAKEL. Ay, my angel! and you shall say I practise what I read.——[*Takes her in his arms,* Mr. Wisdom *knocks, she starts from him.*

MR. WISDOM. [*Without.*] What, have you shut yourselves in?

RAKEL. Ourselves! oh! the devil, doth he know I am here?

MRS. WISDOM. No, no, no; to your hole, quick, quick, quick.

MR. WISDOM. Why, child, Mr. Softly, don't you hear? what, have you played yourselves asleep?

MRS. WISDOM. Oh! my dear, are you there?

SCENE XII.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM.

MR. WISDOM. [*Entering.*] If we were not so nearly related, I should not like this locking up together. Heyday! Where is my brother Softly?

MRS. WISDOM. Alas! my dear, my ungracious nephew hath been here, and taken him away to the tavern.

MR. WISDOM. Why will you suffer that fellow to come within my doors, when you know it is against my will?

MRS. WISDOM. Alas, child, I don't know how to shut your doors against your own relations.

MR. WISDOM. And what were you doing, hey? that you were locked in so close by yourself.

MRS. WISDOM. I was only saying a few prayers, my dear; but indeed these incendiaries run so in my head, I never think myself safe enough.



No, no, no; to your hole, quick, quick, quick.
From an original painting by E. J. Read.



MR. WISDOM. Heaven bless the hour I first thought of putting them there. [*Aside.*

MRS. WISDOM. Well, child, this is very good in you to come home so soon.

MR. WISDOM. I only call on you in my way to the city; for I must speak to alderman Longhorns before I sleep. I am sorry you have lost brother Softly; he might have diverted you a little.

MRS. WISDOM. I can divert myself well enough in my closet for that matter.

MR. WISDOM. Ay, do so. Reading is an innocent and instructive diversion. I will be back with the utmost expedition. Is your closet locked, child? there are some papers in it which I must take with me.—

MRS. WISDOM. (What shall I do?)—Lud, my dear, I—I —have lost the key, I think.

MR. WISDOM. Then it must be broke open; for they are of the utmost consequence——Nay, if you can't tell me where you have laid it, I can't stay, the lock must be broke open; I'll call up one of the servants.

MRS. WISDOM. Nay, then, confidence assist me.——Here, here it is, child——I have nothing but assurance to trust to; and I am resolved to exert the utmost.

[*Opens the door,* Rakel *runs against him, throws him down; he looks on* Mrs. Wisdom, *she points to the door, and he runs out.* Mrs. Wisdom *shrieks.*

MR. WISDOM. Oh! I am murdered.

MRS. WISDOM. The incendiaries are come. My dream is out, my dream is out.

MR. WISDOM. My horns are out.

MRS. WISDOM. Oh! my dear, sure never any thing was so lucky as this stay of yours. Heaven knows what he would have done to me had I been alone.

MR. WISDOM. Ay, ay, my dear, I know what he would have done to you very well.

MRS. WISDOM. I hope you will be advised, and put the money where you are desired, before any thing worse happens.

MR. WISDOM. I shall put you out of doors before any thing worse happens.

MRS. WISDOM. My dear?

MR. WISDOM. My devil! Come, come, confess, it is done already; am I one or no?

MRS. WISDOM. Are you what, my love?

MR. WISDOM. Am I a beast? a monster? a husband?

MRS. WISDOM. Defend me——Sure the fright hath turned your brain. Are you a husband? yes, I hope so, or what am I?

MR. WISDOM. Ah! crocodile! I know very well what sort of robber was here. Nay, perhaps he was a robber, and you may have conspired together to rob me: I don't doubt but you was concerned in writing the letter too. No one likelier to extort money from a man than his wife.

MRS. WISDOM. Oh! barbarous, cruel, inhuman aspersion.

MR. WISDOM. Is he a conjuror as well as a thief, and could he go through the key-hole? How came he into that closet? How came he into that closet, madam, without your knowledge? Answer me that. Did he go through the door?

MRS. WISDOM. I swear by——

MR. WISDOM. Hold, hold. I don't question but you will swear through a thousand doors to get off.

Enter JOHN.

JOHN. Oh! sir, this moment, as I was walking in the yard, I spied a fellow offering to get in at my lady's closet window.

MR. WISDOM. How!

JOHN. Dear sir, step but into the closet, you will find the window broke all to pieces.

MR. WISDOM. The villains!—John, take the candle and go in before me.

MRS. WISDOM. Miraculous fortune! Now will I stand it out that Rakel got in the same way. Sure it must have been the devil that hath broke these windows to encourage us to sin—by this delivery.—Oh! here comes my husband; it is my turn now to be angry, and his to ask pardon.

MR. WISDOM. John, do you watch carefully in the yard this night. I protest a man will shortly be safe no where.

MRS. WISDOM. Not when thieves get through keyholes.

MR. WISDOM. Come, I ask thy pardon; I am sorry I suspected thee; I will make thee amends, I will—I will stay at home this week with thee in spite of business: thou shalt tie me to thy girdle. Nay, do not take on thus, I will buy thy forgiveness. Here, here is a purse to put thy money in; and it shall not be long before I give thee some money to put in thy purse——you shall take the air every day in Hyde Park, and I'll go with you for a guard: I vow you shall forgive me. I'll kiss you till you do.

MRS. WISDOM. You know the way to mollify me.

MR. WISDOM. Why, I was but in jest: I never thought you had any hand in the letter.

MRS. WISDOM. Did you not indeed?

MR. WISDOM. No, indeed; may I be worse than robbed if I did.

MRS. WISDOM. Well, but don't jest so any more.

MR. WISDOM. I promise you:—but I must not lose a moment before I go into the city—

MRS. WISDOM. And will you leave me again to-night?

MR. WISDOM. You must excuse necessity, my dear.

MRS. WISDOM. My dear, I shall always obey your commands without any farther reason.

MR. WISDOM. What a happy man am I in a wife! If all women were but such blessings to their husbands as thou art, what a Heaven would matrimony be.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

RAKEL, *and afterwards* RISQUE.

RAKEL. Love and war I find still require the same talents; to be unconcerned in danger is absolutely necessary

to both. I know not whether it was more lucky that I thought of this stratagem, or that I found Risque on the spot to execute it. I dare swear she will soon take the hint: nor do I see any other way she could possibly have come off.—So, rascal, what success?

RISQUE. I have broke the windows with a vengeance; I have made room enough for your honour to march in at the head of a company of grenadiers, and all this without the least noise. But I hope the lady did not use your honour very ill, that her windows must be broken.

RAKEL. No, Mr. Inquisitive, I have done it for the lady's sake, to give her an opportunity of saying I broke in there; for when I was taken in the closet I was obliged to bring her off by pretending myself a robber.

RISQUE. But if he should take you at your word, and prosecute you, who would bring your honour off?

RAKEL. No matter: it were better fifty such as I were hanged than one woman should lose her reputation. But, as the closet was full of things of value, my touching none would sufficiently preserve me from any villainous imputation, should the worst happen.

RISQUE. I fancy, indeed, it would be no disgrace to be thought to have stolen all you have in your pocket.

RAKEL. What's that you are muttering? Harkye, rascal, be sure not to go to bed: I shall not be at home till early in the morning—Now for my unkind mistress; I may have better success there than I found with my kind one.

> How bless'd is a soldier while licensed to range,
> How pleasant this whore for that to exchange.

RISQUE. Go thy ways, young Satan; the old gentleman himself cannot be much worse. Let me consider a little. My master doth not come home till morning, the closet is full of things of value, and I can very easily get into it.—— Agad, and I'll have a trial. I am in no great danger of being caught in the fact; so if I bring off a good handsome booty—my master stands fair for being hanged for it. Heyday! what the devil have we here?

SCENE II.

COMMONS, *with* WHORES *and Music,* RISQUE.

COMMONS. [*Sings.*] Tol, lol, de rol lol—Now am I Alexander the Great, and you my Statira and Roxana.——You sons of whores, play me Alexander the Great's march.

1 FIDDLER. We don't know it, an't please your worship.

COMMONS. Don't you? Why then—play me the Black Joke.

2 WHORE. Play the White Joke; that's my favourite.

COMMONS. Ay, Black or White, they are all alike to me. [*Music plays.*

2 WHORE. We had better go to the tavern, my dear; the justices of the peace are so severe against us, we shall be taken up and sent to Bridewell.

COMMONS. The justices be hanged, they dare not attack a man of my quality. The moment they knew me to be a lord they would let us all go again.

1 WHORE. Nay, my dear, I ask your pardon; I did not know you were a lord.

COMMONS. Yes, my dear, yes; my Lord Kilfob, that's my title, of the kingdom of Ireland.

RISQUE. [*Advancing.*] My Lord Kilfob, I am glad to see your honour in town.

COMMONS. Ha! Ned Risque, give me thy hand, boy. Come, honest Risque, thou shalt go to the tavern with me and I'll treat thee with a whore and a bottle of wine—— But harkye. [*Whispers.*

1 WHORE. A lord, and so familiar with this fellow! This is some clerk or apprentice strutting about with his master's sword on.

2 WHORE. I fancy, Sukey, this is a sharper, and no coming-down cull.

1 WHORE. Ay, damn him, he'll make us pop our unders for the reckoning: we'll not go with him.

COMMONS. If thou canst lend me half a crown, do; the devil take me if I do not pay thee again to-morrow.

RISQUE. That I would with all my heart, but I have not one souse, I assure you——I am on business for my master, and in a great hurry.——

COMMONS. Get thee gone for a good-for-nothing dog as thou art. Come, sirrah, play on to the tavern.

2 WHORE. I don't know what you mean, sir; we are no company for such as you.

COMMONS. I own you are not fit company for a lord;—but no matter, several lords keep such company; and since I stoop to you——

1 WHORE. You stoop to us, scrub!

2 WHORE. You a lord! You are some attorney's clerk, or haberdasher's 'prentice.

1 WHORE. Do you sit behind a desk, or stand behind a counter?

2 WHORE. We're not for such as you,——we'd have you to know, fellow.

COMMONS. But I am for such as you——and that I'll make you know with a vengeance—— whores, strumpets!

WHORES. Murder, murder, robbery, murder!

COMMONS. I'll scour you with a pox.

[*Beats them off, and returns.*

2 FIDDLER. I wish we were well rid of this chap, I wish we get any thing by him.

1 FIDDLER. I wish we get off with a whole skin and a whole fiddle.

COMMONS. I have paid you off, however.

1 FIDDLER. I wish your honour would pay us off too; for we are obliged to play to some country-dances.

COMMONS. Are not you impudent dogs to ask any thing for such music?——I'll not give you a souse: you are a couple of wretched scrapers, and play ten degrees worse than the university waits. If you had your merit, you would have your fiddles broke about your heads.

1 FIDDLER. Sir, you don't talk like a gentleman.

COMMONS. Don't I, sir? Why then I'll act like a

gentleman. [*Draws.*] This is the way a man of honour pays debts, you dogs; I'll let out your own guts to make fiddle-strings of. A couple of cowardly dogs; run away from one. Blood! I have routed the whole army. Hannibal could have done no more. What pity it is such a brave fellow as I am should be made a parson of!

[*Linkboy crosses.*

Here, you son of a whore, come here. Are you the sun, or the moon, or one of the seven stars?

LINKBOY. Does your honour want a light, sir?

COMMONS. Want a light, sir, ay, sir? Do you take me for a Dissenter, you rascal? Do you think I carry my light within, sirrah? I travel by an outward light. So lead on, you dog, and light me into darkness.

A soph, he is immortal,
And never can decay;
For how should he return to dust
Who daily wets his clay?

SCENE III.

RAKEL *and* MRS. SOFTLY.

MRS. SOFTLY. Forget that letter; it was the effect of a sudden short-lived anger which arose from a lasting love; jealousy is surely the strongest proof of that passion.

RAKEL. It is a proof I always wish to be without, if all my mistresses were as forward to believe my sincerity.

MRS. SOFTLY. All your mistresses——Bravo.

RAKEL. I speak of you, madam, in the plural number, as we do of kings, from my reverence: for if I have another mistress upon earth, may I be—

MRS. SOFTLY. Married to her—which would be curse enough on both. But do not think, captain, that, should I once discover my rival, it would give me any uneasiness;

the suspicion of the falsehood raised my anger, but the knowledge of it would only move my contempt. Be assured I have not love enough to make me uneasy, if I knew you were false; so hang jealousy, I will believe you true.

RAKEL. By all the transports we have felt together, by all the eager raptures which this very night hath witnessed to my passion—— [Softly *hems without.*

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh! heaven! My husband is upon the stairs,——

RAKEL. A judgment fallen upon me before I had forsworn myself—Have you no closet? no chimney?

MRS. SOFTLY. None, nor any way but this out of the room; he must see you—Say nothing, but bow and observe me.

SCENE IV.

MR. SOFTLY, MRS. SOFTLY, RAKEL.

MR. SOFTLY. Sure never was man so put to it to get rid of a troublesome companion.——Heyday, what's here?

MRS. SOFTLY. Sir, I assure you, I am infinitely obliged to you, and so is my husband: I am sorry he is not at home to return you thanks.

[*She courtesies all this time to him, who bows to her.*

MR. SOFTLY. What's the matter, child? what hath the gentleman done for me?

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh! my dear, I am glad you are come—— The gentleman hath done a great deal for me, he hath guarded me home from the play. Indeed, my dear, I am infinitely obliged to the gentleman.

MR. SOFTLY. Ay, we are both infinitely obliged to him. Sir, I am your humble servant: I give you a great many thanks, sir, for the civility you have conferred on my wife. I assure you, sir, you never did a favour to any who will acknowledge it more.

RAKEL. The devil take me if ever I did; I have been as

civil to several wives; but thou art the first husband that ever thanked me for it. [*Aside.*

MR. SOFTLY. Sir, if you will partake of a small collation we have within, we shall think ourselves much honoured in your company.

RAKEL. Sir, the honour would be on my side; but I am unhappily engaged to sup with the duke of Fleet Street.

MR. SOFTLY. I hope, sir, you will shortly give us some other oportunity to thank you.

MRS. SOFTLY. Pray, sir, do not let it be long.

MR. SOFTLY. Sir, my doors will be always open to you.

RAKEL. All these acknowledgments for so small a gallantry make me ashamed: I was only fortunate in the occasion of doing what no young gentleman could have refused. However, sir, I shall take the first opportunity to kiss your hands, and am your most obedient humble servant. ——Not a step, sir.

MR. SOFTLY. Sir, your most humble servant.

SCENE V.

MR. SOFTLY, MRS. SOFTLY.

MR. SOFTLY. I protest one of the civilest gentlemen I ever saw.

MRS. SOFTLY. Most infinitely well-bred.

MR. SOFTLY. I have been making a visit to my neighbour Wisdom, where whom should I meet with but that unlucky rogue, my nephew Commons, who hath taken me to the tavern, and, I protest, almost flustered me.

MRS. SOFTLY. He was here just as you went out, and as rude as ever: but I gave him a sufficient rebuff: I fancy he'll scarce venture here again. And indeed, my dear, he is so very scandalous, I wish you would not suffer him.

MR. SOFTLY. He will be settled in the country soon, and so we shall be rid of him quite. But, my dear, I have

some news to tell you: my sister, Wisdom, hath received just such another letter as yours, threatening to murder her in her chair the first time she goes abroad, unless she lays twenty guineas under a stone. Indeed, she shows abundance of prudence on this occasion, by keeping at home: she doth not go abroad and frighten her poor husband, as you do.

MRS. SOFTLY. My sister Wisdom received such a letter! I am heartily glad you have told me of it; for I owe her a visit, and on this occasion it would be unpardonable to neglect a moment.—Who's there—Order my chair this instant, and do you and the other footman take to your arms.

MR. SOFTLY. Why, you would not visit her at this time o' night?

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh! my dear! it is time enough; it is not yet ten. Oh! I would not for the world, when she will be sure too that I know it. My dear, your servant: I'll make but a short visit, and be back again before you can be set to supper.

MR. SOFTLY. Was ever so unfortunate a wretch as I am! All my contrivances to keep her at home do but send her abroad the more. But I have a virtuous wife however; and truly virtuous women are so rare in this age, one cannot pay too dear for them—Oh! a virtuous wife is a most prodigious blessing.

SCENE VI.—MR. WISDOM'S *House.*

RAKEL, MRS. WISDOM.

RAKEL. To rally again the same night, after such a rebuff, is, I think, madam, a sign of uncommon bravery.

MRS. WISDOM. What is it in me to lead you to that rally, captain, when I must share the chief part of the danger too?

RAKEL. Why indeed, madam, to send me word of this second retreat of your husband was a kindness I know but

one way how to thank you for: and I will thank thee so heartily, my dear, dear, lovely angel.

BETTY. [*Entering.*] Oh! madam! here's Mrs. Softly just coming up.

RAKEL. Mrs. Softly!

MRS. WISDOM. How came she to be let in? Were not my orders, Not at home?

BETTY. She said she knew you were at home, and would see you.—She will be here this instant.

RAKEL. [*Offers to go into the closet.*] The door is locked.

MRS. WISDOM. And my husband hath the key.—It signifies not much if she sees you.

RAKEL. Oh! madam, I am tender of your reputation—This table will hide me. [*Gets under it.*

SCENE VII.

MRS. WISDOM, MRS. SOFTLY.

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh! my dear, I am exceedingly concerned to hear of your misfortune; I ran away the very minute Mr. Softly brought me the news.

MRS. WISDOM. I am very much obliged to you, my dear.

MRS. SOFTLY. But I hope you are not frightened, my dear?

MRS. WISDOM. It is impossible to avoid a little surprise on such an occasion.

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh yes! a little surprise at first; but when one hath sufficient guards about one there can be no danger. Have you not heard that I received just such another letter about three days ago?

MRS. WISDOM. And venture abroad so late?

MRS. SOFTLY. Ha, ha, ha! Have I not a vast deal of courage?

MRS. WISDOM. Indeed, I think so. I am sure I have not slept one wink these three nights.

MRS. SOFTLY. I have not slept much—for I was up two of them at a ball.

MRS. WISDOM. Why, you venture abroad as fearless as if no such thing had happened.

MRS. SOFTLY. It is only the expense of a footman or two the more; no one would stay at home for that, you know. Sure you don't intend to confine yourself any longer on this account. I would not stay at home three days, if I had received as many letters as go by the post in that time.

MRS. WISDOM. You have more courage than I: the apprehension of the danger with me would quite extinguish the pleasure.

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh! you cowardly creature, there is no pleasure without danger: but, I thank heaven, my thoughts are always so full of the former that I leave no room for any meditation on the latter.

SCENE VIII.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM, MRS. SOFTLY, CONSTABLE, SERVANTS.

JOHN. I'll take my oath I saw him go in.

MRS. WISDOM. Bless me, my dear, what's the matter?

MR. WISDOM. Don't be frightened, child; this fellow hath seen the rogue that was here to-day get into the house again. Mr. Constable, that is the closet door: you have the key; therefore do you enter first, and we'll all follow you.

JOHN. Ay, ay, let me alone; do you but lay hands on him, and I'll knock his brains out.

MRS. SOFTLY. Lud, sister, how you tremble! Take example by me, and don't be frightened——Here, John, Thomas, bring up your blunderbusses.

MRS. WISDOM. Support me, or I faint.

SCENE IX.

RISQUE *discovered.*

CONSTABLE. You may as well submit, sir, for we are too strong for you.

JOHN. Confess, sirrah, confess. How many are there of you?

MR. WISDOM. Search his pockets, Mr. Constable.

MRS. WISDOM. What do I see! [*Aside.*

MRS. SOFTLY. Captain Rakel's man! [*Aside.*

MR. WISDOM. It is sufficient! the goods are found upon him. Sirrah! confess your accomplices this moment; you have no other way to save your life than by becoming evidence against your gang.

JOHN. Learn to betray your friends, sirrah! if you would rob like a gentleman and not be hanged for it.

MR. WISDOM. And so, sir, I suppose it was you that writ the threatening letter to my wife. Why don't you speak? You may as well confess; for you will be hanged whether you confess or no.

CONSTABLE. Would it not be your wisest way to impeach your companions; so you may not only save your life, but get rewarded for your roguery?

MR. WISDOM. Is the rascal dumb? We'll find ways to make him speak, I warrant you.

SCENE X.

To them, COMMONS, *drunk and singing.*

COMMONS. Hey! uncle, what a pox do you keep open house at this time of night? Oons, I thought you used to sneak to bed at soberer hours.

MR. WISDOM. How often must I forbid you my house?

COMMONS. Sir, you may forbid me as often as you

please; when your door is open I shall never be able to pass by.

MR. WISDOM. You shall find a very warm reception.

COMMONS. As warm as you please, for it is damned cold without. But come, where's your liquor? You do not entertain all this company without wine, I hope. Why, what a pox are all these?——the militia!

MR. WISDOM. Sir, if you do not go out of my doors this instant, you shall be forced out.

COMMONS. Damn your doors, sir, and your tables too; I'll turn your house out of doors, sir——

[*Overturns the table, and discovers* Rakel.

SCENE XI.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM, MRS. SOFTLY, RAKEL, RISQUE, CONSTABLE, SERVANTS.

JOHN. More rogues! more rogues!

CONSTABLE. I have him secure enough!

MR. WISDOM. This second visit, sir, is exceeding kind. I suppose, sir, this is the honest gentleman that conveys away the goods; we have stopped the goods, and shall convey you both to a proper habitation.

RAKEL. Damnation! [*Aside.*

MRS. WISDOM. Ruined beyond retrieval. [*Aside.*

MRS. SOFTLY. May I believe my eyes! [*Aside.*

MR. WISDOM. [*To* Risque.] You will have but a short time to consider on't; so it were good for you to resolve on being an evidence, and save your own neck at the expense of his.

RISQUE. Well, sir, if I must peach, I must, I think.

MR. WISDOM. [*To* Rakel.] Do you know this gentleman, sir?

RAKEL. [*Aside.*] Confusion! what shall I do?

CONSTABLE. How the rogues stare at one another! What, did you never see one another before?

RISQUE. Pox take him, I wish I had never seen him; I'm sure I am like to pay dear enough for his acquaintance.

MR. WISDOM. You have no other way to prevent it than by swearing against him.

RISQUE. Ay, ay, sir, I'll swear against him; he brought me to this shame, so let me look to it: I never took these courses till I became acquainted with that highwayman there, who hath robbed on all the roads of England.

RAKEL. Ha!

CONSTABLE. And will you swear that this fellow wrote the letter to my master, to threaten to murder my lady whenever she went abroad?

RISQUE. Ay, that I will; I saw him write it with my own eyes.

MR. WISDOM. ———You saw him write it?

RISQUE. Yes, an't please your honour.

MR. WISDOM. I find this fellow will do our business without any other evidence. [*Aside.*

MRS. SOFTLY. Can this be possible? [*Aside.*

MR. WISDOM. And so, if my wife had ventured abroad, you had put your design into execution?

RISQUE. She would have been murdered the very first time, an't please your honour.

MR. WISDOM. See there now—Did I not advise you like a friend?——In short, I know not when it will be safe for you to stir without your own doors.

MRS. WISDOM. And was I to have fallen by the hands of this gentleman?

RISQUE. Yes, madam; he was to have murdered your ladyship, and I was to have robbed you.

RAKEL. Dog! villain!

RISQUE. Don't give ill language, Tom; I have often told you what your rogueries would come to. I told you, you would never leave off thieving but at the gallows.

RAKEL. Villain, be assured I will be revenged on thee!

RISQUE. I desire of your worship that we may not be put together; I do not care for such company.

MR. WISDOM. Mr. Constable, convey them to the Round-

house; let them be kept separately, and in the morning you shall hear from me.

RAKEL. [*To* Wisdom.] Sir, shall I beg to speak one word with you?

MR. WISDOM. You are sure he has no arms about him, Mr. Constable?

CONSTABLE. No, sir, he hath no arms about him, nor any thing else.

RAKEL. This prosecution will end in nothing but your own shame [*Apart to* WISDOM]; so you had best set me at liberty. Be assured that I am not the person you take me for; my character will make it evident that my design was neither to rob nor murder you; my crime, sir, will appear to be such as (Heaven be praised) our laws do not hang a man for.—As for that fellow there, he is my servant; but how, or with what design he came here, I cannot tell.

MR. WISDOM. And is this what you have to say, sir?

RISQUE. Don't believe a word he says, sir; for he is one of the damnedst liars that ever was hanged; he'll tell you he kept a justice of peace for a servant, if you will believe him.

MR. WISDOM. He says he kept you as such.

RISQUE. Ay, there it is now. Art thou not a sad dog, Tom?—But thou wilt pay for all thy rogueries shortly.

[Wisdom *points to the* Constable.

CONSTABLE. Come, bring them along; march, you poor beggarly rascal——you a rogue, and be damned to you, without a penny in your pocket.

SCENE XII.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM, MRS. SOFTLY.

MR. WISDOM. Don't be frightened, my dear; while you are at home, you are in no danger. Sister Softly, I am sorry you find my family in such disorder.

MRS. SOFTLY. I am heartily sorry for your sake, dear brother; but heaven knows how soon it may be our own fate; for I suppose you know we have received a letter too.

MR. WISDOM. We must find some way to break the neck of this trade. Here's my poor wife will not be able to stir abroad this winter.

MRS. SOFTLY. Not stir abroad this winter! Marry, forbid it! she hath stayed at home longer already than I would have done, had the danger been ten times greater: I would rather lose my life than my liberty.——Where's the difference, whether one be locked up in one's own grave, or one's own house?—My soul is such an enemy to confinement, that if my body were confined, it would not stay in it.

MR. WISDOM. Oh lud! here's doctrine for my wife. May your body never enter my doors again, I pray Heaven. [*Aside.*] But if you have no more fears for yourself, I hope you would have some for your husband.

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh! dear sir, the wife who loves her husband as well as herself is an exceeding good Christian. That man must be a most unreasonable creature, who expects a woman to abstain from pleasures for his sake.

MR. WISDOM. Hoity-toity! I hope you will allow that a woman ought to avoid some pleasures for the sake of her husband.

MRS. SOFTLY. Oh, certainly! ought, no doubt on't. But to speak freely, I am afraid when once a woman's pleasures run counter to the interest of her husband, when once she finds greater pleasures abroad than at home, I am afraid all the threatening letters in Europe will not keep her from them.

MR. WISDOM. Oh lud! Oh lud!

MRS. SOFTLY. But to show you that I am of a contrary opinion, I will leave the most agreeable company in the world to go home to my husband.——No ceremony.

MR. WISDOM. I will see you into the chair.

MRS. SOFTLY. Sister, your servant.

MRS. WISDOM. My dear, I am yours.—What shall I

think? Rakel cannot be guilty of such villainy. But then how came his servant here? He sent him to break the windows—and he exceeded his commission——It must be so ——and what he hath said was only forged to excuse himself.

SCENE XIII.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM.

MR. WISDOM. I wish you well home, madam; and may you never come abroad again.—My dear, I am afraid she hath quite struck you dumb with surprise. This woman is a walking contagion, and ought not to be admitted into one's house. She is able to raise a universal conjugal rebellion in the nation.

MRS. WISDOM. Alas! my dear, I wish this affair had not happened. I vow, I feel a sort of pity for these poor wretches, whom necessity hath driven to such courses. One of them seems so young too, that if he were forgiven perhaps he might amend—

MR. WISDOM. His method of robbing, perhaps, and the next time cut our throats.

MRS. WISDOM. Strict justice seems too rigorous in my opinion; and, though it may be a womanish weakness, I could wish you would forgive them.

MR. WISDOM. Be assured, my love, it is a womanish weakness which makes you plead for the life of a young fellow. By the women's consent we should have no rogues hanged till after they are forty.

MRS. WISDOM. In one so young, vice hath not so strong a root.

MR. WISDOM. You lie, my dear; vice hath often the strongest root in a young fellow. So, say no more, I am determined he shall be hanged: I will go take my mess of sugar-sops, and to bed. In the morning early I will go to a justice of the peace.

MRS. WISDOM. But consider, my dear, will you not provoke the rest of the gang to revenge?

MR. WISDOM. Fear nothing, my dear.

While in your husband's arms you keep your treasure,
You're free from fear of hurt.—

MRS. WISDOM. Or hope of pleasure.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An inner Room in the Round-house.*

COMMONS, RAKEL.

COMMONS. Prithee, Tom, forgive me.

RAKEL. Forgive thee! Death and damnation! dost thou insult my misfortunes? Dost thou think I am come to the tree, where I am to whine out of the world like a good Christian, and forgive all my enemies? If thou wilt hear my last prayer, damn thee heartily, heartily.

COMMONS. Amen, if I designed thee any mischief.

RAKEL. Rat your designs; it is equal to me whether you designed it or not; and I will forgive you and that rascal Risque at the same time.

COMMONS. Nay, but, dear Tom, why the danger is not so great as thou apprehendest: it will never be believed that thou didst intend to rob my uncle; thy reputation will prevent that.

RAKEL. But it will be believed that I intended to cuckold your uncle; my reputation will not prevent that: and I would rather sacrifice the world than my mistress—— Oons! I believe thou didst intend to discover me, to save the virtue of thy aunt.

COMMONS. To save the devil! You should lie with all my aunts, or with my mother and sisters: nay, I will carry a letter for you to any of them.

RAKEL. Carry a letter! If thou wilt get me two letters that were taken out of my pocket when I was searched, I will forgive thee—It is in vain to keep it a secret. Your uncle Wisdom hath in his possession a letter from each of your aunts, which, unless we get back, must ruin them both.

COMMONS. But I suppose he hath read them already.

RAKEL. Then they are ruined already.

COMMONS. Prithee, what are the letters?

RAKEL. I believe, sir, you may guess what business is between them and me.

COMMONS. Harkye, Tom———There is no smut in them.

RAKEL. There is nothing more in them than from the one an invitation to come and see her, and from the other a very civil message that she will never see my face again.

CONSTABLE. [*Enters.*] Captain, you must go before the justice. As for you, sir, you have your liberty to go where you please. I hope you will be as good as your word, and remember to buy your stockings at my shop; for, if I had not persuaded the gentleman to make up the affair, you might have gone before the justice too.

COMMONS. Mr. Constable, I am obliged to you; and, the next time you take me up, I hope I shall have more money in my pocket. Come, noble captain, be not dejected; I'll stand by thee, whatever be the consequence.——Mr. Constable, we'll wait on you immediately.——Harkye, I have a thought just risen may bring the ladies off in the easiest manner imaginable.

RAKEL. What hath the devil inspired thee with?

COMMONS. Suppose now I should swear that I forged their hands. Luckily for the purpose I have had a quarrel this very day with my uncle Wisdom, and another with my aunt Softly: so that we may persuade the old gentleman that I sent the letters to you in order to be revenged on them. Now, if we could persuade them this.

RAKEL. Which we might, if they were as ready to believe any thing as thou art to swear any thing; but as the case happeneth to be quite contrary, thy stratagem is

good for nothing: so fare you well. Nothing will prosper with me whilst I keep such a wicked fellow company.

COMMONS. The invitation must be from my aunt Wisdom by his being there———Odd, if there be no direction, it may do——Thou art such a dear wicked dog, I cannot leave thee in the lurch.

SCENE II.

MR. WISDOM, MRS. WISDOM.

MR. WISDOM. Pray, no more of your good nature, my dear. It is a very good-natured thing truly to save one rogue's throat, that he may cut twenty honest people's. The good nature of women is as furious as their ill nature; they would save or destroy, without distinction. But by this time, I suppose, my brother Softly is ready. So, child, good-morrow.

MRS. WISDOM. Nay, my dear, I dare not trust myself even in my own house without you, now you have provoked the gang. So, if you are determined to go, you shall carry me to return my sister's visit.

MR. WISDOM. Indeed, my dear, I will carry you to a masquerade as soon. No, no; no more visiting there. If my sister's husband's brother marries a mad woman, she shall not spoil my wife; I'll carry you to no such lectures. She will teach you more naughtiness in half an hour than half a dozen modern comedies! nay, than the lewd epilogues to as many modern tragedies.

MRS. WISDOM. Which you never suffer me to go to though you seldom miss yourself.

MR. WISDOM. Well, I must not lose a moment; good-morrow.

MRS. WISDOM. So you leave me behind to be murdered.

MR. WISDOM. You'll come to no harm, I warrant you. [*Exit.*

MRS. WISDOM. I cannot think that, when I know what you are going upon. If this generous creature should have

honour enough to preserve my reputation, shall I suffer him to preserve it at the expense of a life, which was dearer to me than fame before, and by such an instance of honour will become still more precious? No, should it come to that, I will give up my honour to preserve my lover, and will be myself the witness to his innocence.——Who's there?

SCENE III.

MRS. WISDOM, BETTY.

MRS. WISDOM. Call a chair.

BETTY. Madam!

MRS. WISDOM. Call a chair.

BETTY. And is your ladyship resolved to venture abroad?

MRS. WISDOM. I begin to laugh at the danger I apprehended. But however, that I may not be too bold, order the footman to take a blunderbuss with him: and, d'ye hear, order him to hire chairmen, and arm them with muskets. I am resolved to pluck up a spirit, Betty, and show my husband that I am like other women.

BETTY. I am heartily glad to see your ladyship hath so much courage; I always liked those families the best where the ladies governed the most. Where ladies govern there are secrets, and where there are secrets there are vails.——I lived with a lady once who used to give her clothes away every month, and her husband durst not oppose it.

MRS. WISDOM. Go, do as I bid you in a moment, I have no time to lose; I will but put on my mantle and be ready.

SCENE IV.—MR. SOFTLY'S *House.*

MRS. SOFTLY. [*Alone.*] That he should convey himself under her table without her knowledge is something difficult to believe. Nor can I imagine any necessities capable of

driving him to so abandoned a course. Her concern seemed to have another cause than fear. Besides, I remember, when we were at the masquerade together, he talked to her near an hour; and, if I mistake not, she was so pleased with his conversation, that she gave him encouragements which he was unlikely to have mistaken.——It must be so——whatever was his design, she was privy to it. He is false, and so adieu, good captain.

SCENE V.

MR. SOFTLY, MRS. SOFTLY.

MR. SOFTLY. My dear, your servant: no news of my brother Wisdom yet? I have been considering how lucky it is that ours was not the house attacked——we might not so happily have discovered it. (Poor fool, how little she suspects who the incendiaries were.)

MRS. SOFTLY. Heaven send the gang be quite broke; I shall be obliged to make more servants mount the guard now whenever I go out.

MR. SOFTLY. It would be much more advisable for you to stay at home, and then no one need mount guard upon you but your husband.

MRS. SOFTLY. Never name it, I am no more safe at home than abroad; for, if the rogues should set our house on fire, I am sure no one would wish to be in it.

MR. SOFTLY. Still my arguments retort upon me, and like food to ill blood, promote the disease, not the cure. Well, my dear, take your swing, I'll give you no more of my advice——and I heartily wish you may never stay at home.

MRS. SOFTLY. Why do you wish so?

MR. SOFTLY. Because I am sure you must be lamed first.

MRS. SOFTLY. Why, indeed, my dear, I think no one would stay at home who had legs to go abroad.

MR. SOFTLY. Truly, my dear, if I was sure she would

have stayed at home I would have chosen a wife without legs, before the finest-legged woman in the universe; but she who can't walk will be carried. I have no need to complain of your legs, for they seldom carry you farther than your own door. And truly, my dear, reckoning the number of your attendants, you go abroad now upon a dozen legs.

SERVANT. [*Enters.*] Sir, Mr. Wisdom to wait on your worship.

MR. SOFTLY. Show him up:—Will you stay and hear the trial?

MRS. SOFTLY. No, I have other business; by that time I am dressed I expect a lady to call on me to go to another trial; I mean the rehearsal of the new opera.

SCENE VI.

MR. WISDOM, MR. SOFTLY.

MR. SOFTLY. Brother Wisdom, your servant: my wife tells me you have made a discovery of the incendiaries. Ha, ha, ha! she little thinks who wrote the letters.

MR. WISDOM. No, nor do you think who will appear to have written them.

MR. SOFTLY. I hope we shall not appear to have written them.

MR. WISDOM. No, no. One of the fellows I have in custody offers to swear it on the other.

MR. SOFTLY. How! but you know we cannot admit of such a testimony, whereof we know the falsehood.

MR. WISDOM. And what then? you don't take the false oath, do you? Are you to answer for the sins of another?

MR. SOFTLY. But will not the other circumstances do without that of the letter?

MR. WISDOM. Yes, they will do to hang him; but will not have the same terror on our wives.

MR. SOFTLY. I am glad of it with all my heart; I am sure I have severely paid for all the terrors I have given my wife: if I could bring her to be only as bad as she was before I should think myself entirely happy. In short, brother, I have found by woeful experience, that mending our wives is like mending our constitutions, when often after all our pains we would be glad to return to our former state.

MR. WISDOM. Well, brother, if it be so, I have no reason to repent having been a valetudinarian.—But let me tell you, brother, you do not know how to govern a wife.

MR. SOFTLY. And let me tell you, brother, you do not know what it is to have a woman of spirit to govern.

MR. WISDOM. A fig for her spirit, I know what it is to have a virtuous wife; and perhaps I am the only man in town that knows what it is to keep a wife at home.

MR. SOFTLY. Brother do not upbraid me with my wife's going abroad: if she doth, it is in the best company. And for virtue——for that, sir, my wife's name is Lucretia——Lucretia the second; and I don't question but she's as chaste as the first was.

MR. WISDOM. Ay, ay, and I believe so too——But don't let the squeamishness of your conscience put a stop to my success: And let me tell you, if you are not advantaged by the stratagem, you will be disadvantaged by the discovery; for if you put such a secret into your wife's bosom, let me tell you, you are not Solomon the second.

SCENE VII.

MR. WISDOM, MR. SOFTLY, CONSTABLE, RAKEL, RISQUE, CLERK, SERVANTS.

SERVANT. Sir, here is a constable with some prisoners.

MR. SOFTLY. Bring them in. Brother Wisdom, I will stretch both law and conscience as wide as possible to serve you.

CONSTABLE. Come, gentlemen, walk in and take your places.

MR. SOFTLY. Are these the two fellows, Mr. Constable, that you found last night broke into Mr. Wisdom's house?

CONSTABLE. Yes, an't please your worship.

RISQUE. We are the two rogues, an't please your worship.

MR. WISDOM. This fellow is to be admitted evidence against the other.

RISQUE. Yes, I am evidence for the king.

MR. SOFTLY. Where is my clerk? Mr. Sneaksby, let that fellow be sworn.

RISQUE. May it please your worship, I have a sort of scruple of conscience; I have been told that you are apter to hire rogues to swear against one another than to pay them for it when they have done it. Therefore, supposing it to be all the same case with your worship, I should be glad to be paid beforehand.

MR. SOFTLY. What does the simple fellow mean?

MR. WISDOM. Perhaps we shall not want his evidence; here are some papers which were found in the other's pocket. I have opened one of them only, which I find to contain the whole method of their conspiracy.

MR. SOFTLY. Mr. Sneaksby, read these papers.

SNEAKSBY. [*Reads.*] "To Ensign Rakel. Parole Plunder."

MR. WISDOM. Plunder's the word, agad!

SNEAKSBY. "For the guard to-morrow, Ensign Rakel, two serjeants, two corporals, one drum, and six and thirty men."

MR. SOFTLY. Why, the rogues are incorporated, they are regimented——we shall shortly have a standing army of rogues as well as of soldiers.

MR. WISDOM. Six and thirty rogues about the town to-day: Mr. Softly, we must look to our houses, I expect to hear of several fires and murders before night.

MR. SOFTLY. Truly, brother Wisdom, I fear it will be necessary to keep the city train-bands continually under arms.

MR. WISDOM. They won't do, sir, they won't do. Six

and thirty of these bloody fellows would beat them all.—— Sir, six and thirty of these rogues would require at least one hundred of the foot-guards to cope with them.

MR. SOFTLY. Mr. Sneaksby, read on, we shall make farther discoveries, I'll engage.

SNEAKSBY. Here's a woman's hand, may it please your worship.

MR. SOFTLY. Read it, read it, there are women robbers as well as men.

SNEAKSBY. [*Reads.*] "Be here at the time you mention, my husband is luckily out of the way. I wish your happiness be, as you say, entirely in the power of

"ELIZABETH WISDOM."

MR. WISDOM. What's that? Who's that?

SNEAKSBY. Elizabeth Wisdom.

MR. WISDOM. [*Snatches the letter.*] By all the plagues of hell, my wife's own hand too.

MR. SOFTLY. I always thought she would be discovered, one time or other, to be no better than she should be. [*Aside.*

MR. WISDOM. I am confounded, amazed, speechless.

MR. SOFTLY. What's the matter, brother Wisdom? Sure your wife doth not hold correspondence with these people; your wife! that durst not go abroad for fear of them; who is the only wife in town that her husband can keep at home!

MR. WISDOM. Blood and furies, I shall become the jest of the town.

SNEAKSBY. May it please your worship, here is one letter more, in a woman's hand too.

MR. SOFTLY. The same woman's hand, I warrant you.

SNEAKSBY. [*Reads.*] "Sir, your late behaviour hath determined me never to see you more: if you get entrance into this house for the future, it will not be by my consent; for I desire you would henceforth imagine there never was any acquaintance between you and "LUCRETIA SOFTLY."

MR. WISDOM. Ha!

MR. SOFTLY. Lucretia Softly!——Give me the letter.——Brother Wisdom, this is some counterfeit.

MR. WISDOM. It must be so. Sure it cannot come from Lucretia the second; she that is as chaste as the first Lucretia was——She correspond with such as these, who never goes out of doors but to the best company in town!

MR. SOFTLY. 'Tis impossible!

MR. WISDOM. You may think so; but I, who understand women better, will not be so easily satisfied.——I'll go fetch my wife hither, and if she doth not acquit herself in the plainest manner, brother Softly, you shall commit her and her rogues together.——Ha! what do I see? An apparition!

SCENE VIII.

To them, MRS. WISDOM, *guarded.*

MRS. WISDOM. Let the rest of my guards stay without.—My dear, your servant.

MR. WISDOM. This must be some delusion, this can't be real.

MRS. WISDOM. I see you are surprised at my courage, my dear; but don't think I have ventured hither alone, I have a whole regiment of guards with me.

MR. WISDOM. You have a whole regiment of devils with you, my dear.

MRS. WISDOM. Ha, ha, ha!

SCENE IX.

To them, MRS. SOFTLY.

MRS. SOFTLY. Joy of your coming abroad, sister Wisdom! I flew to meet you the moment my servant brought me the agreeable news you were here.

MRS. WISDOM. I am extremely obliged to you, madam; but I wish this surprise may have no ill effect on poor Mr. Wisdom; he looks as if he had seen an apparition.

MRS. SOFTLY. Nay, it will be a great surprise to all your acquaintance; you must have made an hundred visits before it will be believed.

MRS. WISDOM. Oh! my dear, I intend to make almost as many before I go home again.

MR. WISDOM. Plagues and furies!

MR. SOFTLY. I fancy, brother Wisdom, you begin to be as weary of the letter-project as myself.

MR. WISDOM. Harkye, you crocodile——devil! come here, do you know this hand? [Softly *shows* Mrs. Softly *her letter at the same time.*

MRS. WISDOM.———Ha! [*Starts.*

MR. WISDOM. You counterfeited your fear bravely; you were much terrified with the thoughts of the enemy, while you kept a private correspondence with him.

SCENE *the last.*

To them, COMMONS.

COMMONS. So, uncles, I see you take turns to keep the rendezvous. Uncle Wisdom, I hope you are not angry with me for what I said last night. When a man is drunk, you know, his reason is not sober; and when his reason is not sober, a man that acts according to his reason cannot act soberly. There's logic for you, uncle; you see I have not forgotten all my university learning.

MR. WISDOM. I shall take another opportunity, sir, to talk with you.

COMMONS. Well, aunt Wisdom, I hope you will reconcile my uncle to me; I should have waited on you last night, according to your invitation, when my uncle was abroad, but I was engaged. I received your letter too, madam.

MRS. SOFTLY. My letter, brute!

COMMONS. Yes, madam; did you not send me a letter last night that you would never see my face again, desiring me to forget that I had ever any acquaintance with you: nay, I think you may be ashamed to own it; here's a good-natured woman that tries to make up all differences between relations——Ha! what do I see! Captain Rakel!

RAKEL. You see a man who is justly punished by the shame he now suffereth for the injury he hath done you. Those two letters you mention, I took last night from your bureau, which you accidentally left open: and fired with the praises which you have so often and so justly bestowed on this lady, I took that opportunity, when she told me her husband would be absent, to convey myself through the window into the closet. What followed, I need not mention any more than what I designed.

COMMONS. Rob my bureau, sir!

RAKEL. Nay, dear Jack, forgive me; these ladies have the greatest reason to be offended, since the letters, being found in my pockets, had like to have caused some suspicions which would not have been to their advantage.

MRS. WISDOM. Excellent creature!

RAKEL. But, gentlemen, if you please to look at these letters, you will find they are not directed to me.

MRS. WISDOM. They have no direction at all.

MR. SOFTLY. I told you, brother, my wife could not be guilty.

MR. WISDOM. I am heartily glad to find mine is not—you see, madam, what your disobedience to my orders had like to have occasioned.—How often have I strictly commanded you never to write to that fellow?

MRS. WISDOM. His carelessness hath cured me for the future.

MR. WISDOM. And so, sir, you keep company with highwaymen, do you?

COMMONS. What do you mean, sir?

MR. WISDOM. Sir, you will know when your acquaintance is sent to Newgate.—Brother Softly, I desire you would order a mittimus for these fellows instantly.

COMMONS. A mittimus! for whom?

MR. WISDOM. For these honest gentlemen, your acquaintance, who broke into my house.

COMMONS. Do you know, sir, that this gentleman is an officer of the army?

MR. WISDOM. Sir, it is equal to me what he is. If he be an officer, he only proves that a rogue may be under a red coat, and very shortly you will prove that a rogue may be under a black one.

COMMONS. Why, sir, you will make yourselves ridiculous, that will be all you will get by it. I'll be the captain's witness he had no ill design on your house.

MR. WISDOM. And I suppose, sir, you will be his witness that he did not write the letter threatening to murder my wife.

MRS. SOFTLY. That I will. If any one be convicted as an incendiary, I am afraid it will go hard with you two.—I overheard your fine plot.—Sister Wisdom, do you know this hand?—This is the threatening letter. [*Showing a letter.*

MRS. WISDOM. Sure it cannot be my husband's?

MRS. SOFTLY. As surely as that which you received was written by mine.

MRS. WISDOM. Amazement! What can it mean?

MRS. SOFTLY. Only a new way to keep a wife at home; which, I dare swear, mine heartily repents of.

MR. SOFTLY. Ay, that I do indeed.

MRS. WISDOM. And is it possible that these terrible threatening letters can have come from our own dear husbands?

MRS. SOFTLY. From those very hands that should defend us against all our enemies.

MR. SOFTLY. Come, brother Wisdom,—I see we are fairly detected; we had as good plead guilty, and sue for mercy. I assure you, my dear, I shall think myself very happy if you will return to our old way of living, and go abroad just as you did before this happened.

MR. WISDOM. Truly I believe it would have been soon my interest to have made the same bargain.

MRS. SOFTLY. Lookye, my dear, as for the blunderbusses, I agree to leave them at home; but I am resolved not to part with the additional footman; he must remain as a sort of monument of my victory.

MR. SOFTLY. Well, brother Wisdom, what shall be done with the prisoner? This fellow's oath will have no great weight in a court of justice.

MR. WISDOM. Do just what you will; I am so glad and sorry, pleased and displeased, that I am almost out of my senses.

RAKEL. I told you how the prosecution would end. Upon my honour, sir, I have no design upon any thing that belongs to you, but your wife.

MR. WISDOM. Your very humble servant, sir. I do believe you by the emptiness of your pockets; but this gentleman seemed to have some other design by the fulness of his.

MR. SOFTLY. With what conscience, sirrah, did you presume to take a false oath?

RISQUE. With the same, Mr. Justice, that you would have received it, when you knew it to be false. Lookee, gentlemen, you had best hold your tongues, or I shall become evidence for the king against you both. As for my master, he, I hope, will forgive me; for I only intended to get the reward, and then I would have sworn all back again. —Sir, if your honour doth not forgive me, I'll confess that I brought you the letters from the ladies, and spoil all yet.

RAKEL. By your amendment, I know not what I may be brought to do——till I get you to the regiment.

COMMONS. Well, uncle Wisdom, you are not angry, are you?

MRS. WISDOM. Let me intercede, my dear.

MR. WISDOM. You are always interceding for him; I wish his own good behaviour would. I think, for the sake of religion, I will buy him what he desires, a commission in the army; and then the sooner he is knocked on the head the better.

RAKEL. Well, brother, if thou dost come among us, it may be some time or other in my power to make thee

reparation.—But to you, madam, I never shall be able to give any satisfaction for my bold design against your virtue.

MRS. WISDOM. Unless by desisting for the future.

MRS. SOFTLY. Be assured if my sister forgives you the injury you intended her, I never will.

MR. SOFTLY. Come, come, my dear, you must be of a more forgiving temper; and since matters are like to be amicably adjusted, you shall entertain the company at breakfast, and we will laugh away the frolic.

RAKEL. Pray, ladies, let me give you this advice: If you ever should write a love-letter, never sign your name to it.—And, gentlemen, that you may prevent it——think not by any force or sinister stratagem to imprison your wives. The laws of England are too generous to permit the one, and the ladies are generally too cunning to be outwitted by the other.——But let this be your maxim,

Those wives for pleasures very seldom roam,
Whose husbands bring substantial pleasures home.

THE GRUB STREET OPERA

AS IT WAS ACTED AT THE

THEATRE IN THE HAYMARKET

BY

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS

Sing.	Nom.	*Hic, hæc, hoc.*
	Gen.	*Hujus.*
	Dat.	*Huic.*
	Accus.	*Hunc, hanc, hoc.*
	Voc.	*Caret.*—Lilly's *Grammar, quod vide.*

INTRODUCTION

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS, PLAYER

PLAYER. I very much approve the alteration of your title from the Welsh to the Grub Street Opera.

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS. I hope, sir, it will recommend me to that learned society: for they like nothing but what is most indisputably their own.

PLAYER. I assure you, it recommends you to me, and will, I hope, to the town.

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS. It would be impolitic in you, who are a young beginner, to oppose that society, which the established theatres so professedly favour: besides, you see the town are ever on its side: for I would not have you think, sir, all the members of that august body confined to the street they take their name from; no, no, the rules of Grub Street are as extensive as the rules of the King's Bench. We have them of all orders and degrees; and it is no more a wonder to see our members in ribands, than to see them in rags.

PLAYER. May the whole society unite in your favour.

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS. Nay, sir, I think no man can set out with greater assurance of success.—It was the favour which the town hath already shown to the Welsh Opera, which gave birth to this, wherein I have kept only what they particularly approved in the former.——You will find several additions to the first act, and the second and third, except in one scene, entirely new.

PLAYER. You have made additions, indeed, to the altercative or scolding scenes, as you are pleased to call them.

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS. Oh! sir! they cannot be heightened; too much altercation is the particular property

of Grub Street: with what spirit do Robin and Will rap out the lie at one another for half a page together—You lie, and you lie—Ah! Ah! the whole wit of Grub Street consists in these two little words—you lie.

PLAYER. That is esteemed so unanswerable a repartee, that it is, among gentlemen, generally the last word that is spoken.

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS. Ay, sir, and it is the first and last among ours.——I believe I am the first that hath attempted to introduce this sort of wit upon the stage; but it hath flourished among our political members a long while. Nay, in short, it is the only wit that flourishes among them.

PLAYER. And you may get as much by it as they do. ——But, pray, sir, what is the plot or design of this Opera? For I could not well discover at the rehearsals.

SCRIBLERUS SECUNDUS. As for plot, sir——I had written an admirable one; but having observed that the plots of our English Operas have had no good effect on our audiences —so I have e'en left it out—For the design, it is deep—very deep.——This Opera was writ, sir, with a design to instruct the world in economy.—It is a sort of family Opera. The husband's vade-mecum; and it is very necessary for all married men to have it in their houses.——So if you please I will communicate a word or two of my design to the audience, while you prepare matters behind the scenes.

PLAYER. I shall expect you there, sir.

The author does, in humble scenes, produce
Examples fitted to your private use.
Teaches each man to regulate his life,
To govern well his servants and his wife.
Teaches that servants well their masters choose;
That wives will ride their husbands round the house.
Teaches that jealousy does oft arise,
Because men's sense is dimmer than their eyes.
Teaches young gentlemen do oft pursue
More women than they well know how to—woo;

Teaches that parsons teach us the right way,
And when we err we mind not what they say.
Teaches that pious women often groan,
For sake of their religion—when they've none;
Teaches that virtue is the maid's best store:
Teaches all these, and teaches nothing more.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN.

Sir Owen Apshinken, a gentleman of Wales, in love with tobacco	*Mr. Furnival.*
Master Owen Apshinken, his son, in love with womankind	*Mr. Stopler.*
Mr. Apshones, his tenant	*Mr. Wathan.*
Puzzletext, his chaplain, in love with women, tobacco, drink, and backgammon	*Mr. Reynolds.*
Robin, his butler, in love with Sweetissa .	*Mr. Mullart.*
William, his coachman, enemy to Robin, in love with Susan	*Mr. Jones.*
John, his groom, in love with Margery . .	*Mr. Dove.*
Thomas, the gardener	*Mr. Hicks.*

WOMEN

Lady Apshinken, wife to Sir Owen, a great house-wife, governante to her husband, a zealous advocate for the Church . .			*Mrs. Furnival.*
Molly Apshones, daughter to Mr. Apshones, a woman of strict virtue . . .			*Miss Patty Vaughan.*
Sweetissa, waiting-woman	Women of strict virtue in love with	Robin	*Mrs. Nokes.*
Susan, cook		Will	*Mrs. Mullart.*
Margery, housemaid		John	*Mrs. Lacy.*

SCENE.—Wales, North or South

THE GRUB STREET OPERA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Sir Owen Apshinken's *House. Table and chairs.*

Sir Owen Apshinken *and* Puzzletext *smoking.*

Sir Owen Apshinken. Come, Mr. Puzzletext, it is your glass.—Let us make an end of our breakfast before madam is up.—Oh, Puzzletext! what a fine thing it is for a man of my estate to stand in fear of his wife, that I dare not get drunk so much as—once a day, without being called to an account for it.

Puzzletext. Petticoat-government is a very lamentable thing indeed.—But it is the fate of many an honest gentleman.

AIR I.

What a wretched life
Leads a man a tyrant wife,
While for each small fault he's corrected;
One bottle makes a sot,
One girl is ne'er forgot,
And duty is always neglected.

But though nothing can be worse
Than this fell domestic curse,

Some comfort this may do you,
So vast are the henpecked bands,
That each neighbour may shake hands,
With my humble service to you.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. Oh, Puzzletext! if I could but enjoy my pipe undisturbed, how happy should I be! for I never yet could taste any pleasure but in tobacco.

PUZZLETEXT. Tobacco is a very good thing, indeed, and there is no harm in taking it abundantly.

SCENE II.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN, LADY APSHINKEN, PUZZLETEXT.

LADY APSHINKEN. At your morning-draught, Sir Owen, I find, according to custom; but I shall not trouble myself with such a drone as you are. Methinks you, Mr. Puzzletext, should not encourage drunkenness.

PUZZLETEXT. I ask your ladyship's pardon; I profess I have scarce drunk your health this morning—and wine, while it contributeth only to the cheering of the spirits, is not forbidden us.—I am an enemy to excess—but as far as the second bottle, nay, to some constitutions, a third, is, no doubt, allowable—and I do remember to have preached with much perspicuity even after a fourth.

LADY APSHINKEN. Oh intolerable! do you call four bottles no excess?

PUZZLETEXT. To some it may, to others it may not.—— Excess dependeth not on the quantity that is drunk, but on the quality of him who drinketh.

LADY APSHINKEN. I do not understand this sophistry—though I think I have some skill in divinity.

PUZZLETEXT. Oh, madam! no one more. Your ladyship is the honour of your sex in that study, and may properly be termed "The great Welsh lamp of divinity."

LADY APSHINKEN. I have always had an inclination to

maintain religion in the parish——and some other time shall be glad to dispute with you concerning excess——but at present I must impart something to you concerning my son, whom I have observed too familiar with the maids———

PUZZLETEXT. Which of the maids, madam?—Not one of my mistresses, I hope. [*Aside.*

LADY APSHINKEN. Truly, with all of them—and unless we prevent it, I am afraid we shall hear of a marriage not much to our liking——and you know Mr. Puzzletext, how hard a thing it would be for us, who have but one child, to have him throw himself away.

PUZZLETEXT. What methods shall we take in order thereto?

LADY APSHINKEN. I know but one—we must prevent his marrying them, by marrying them to others—we have as many men as maids; now I rely on you to match them up to one another;—for whilst there is one unmarried wench in the house, I shall think him in danger. —Oh, Mr. Puzzletext! the boy takes after his father, not me—his head is full of nothing but love; for whatever Nature hath done for him in another way, she hath left his head unfurnished.

PUZZLETEXT. Love, in a young mind, is powerful indeed.

AIR II. *Lads of Dunce.*

If love gets into a soldier's heart,
He puts off his helmet, his bow and his dart.
Achilles, charmed with a nymph's fair eye,
A distaff took, and his arms laid by.
The gay gods of old their heaven would quit,
And leave their ambrosia for a mortal tit-bit;
The first of their tribe, that whore-master Jove,
Preferred to all heavens, the heaven of love.

LADY APSHINKEN. I think you have already asked them all in the church, so that you have only to hasten the match

——this I assure you, I shall not forget the favour. I am now going to take a short airing in the Park, in my own chaise, and would have you remember we have no time to lose.

PUZZLETEXT. Well, sir, you heard what my lady says—what shall I do?

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. E'en what she commands.—If she interferes not with my pipe, I am resolved not to interfere with her family.—Let her govern, while I smoke.

PUZZLETEXT. Upon my word, Sir Owen is a thorough epicurean philosopher. I must now seek the young squire, who is a philosopher of another kind.

SCENE III.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *solus* [*with two letters*]. This is the day wherein Robin and Sweetissa propose to be married, which unless I can prevent, I lose all my hopes of her; for when once a woman knows what's what, she knows too much for me.——Sure never man was so put to it in his amours—for I do not care to venture on a woman after another, nor does any woman care for me twice.

AIR III. *Let the drawer bring clean glasses.*

How curst the puny lover!
  How exquisite the pain,
When love is fumbled over,
  To view the fair's disdain!

But oh! how vast the blessing!
  Whom to her bosom pressing,
She whispers, while caressing
  Oh! when shall we again?

Here are two letters, which I have forged; one as from Susan to Robin, the other from William to Sweetissa:

these must be dropped where they may be found by the improper parties, and will create a jealousy, whereof I may reap the fruit, and Sweetissa's maidenhead may be yet my own.

SCENE IV.

PUZZLETEXT *and* MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN.

PUZZLETEXT. Mr. Owen! I have been searching for you. I am come, child, to give you some good instructions.—I am sorry to hear you have an intention to disgrace your family by a marriage inferior to your birth.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Do not trouble your head with my marriage, good Mr. Parson.—When I marry, 'twill be to please myself not you.

PUZZLETEXT. But let it not be such a marriage as may reflect upon your understanding.—Consider, sir,—consider who you are.

AIR IV. *March in Scipio.*

Think, mighty sir, ere you are undone,
Think who you are, Apshinken's only son;
At Oxford you have been, at London eke also;
You're almost half a man, and more than half a beau:
Oh do not then disgrace the great actions of your life!
Nor let Apshinken's son be buried in his wife.

PUZZLETEXT. You must govern your passions, Master Owen.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. You may preach, Mr. Parson, but I shall very little regard you. There is nothing so ridiculous as to hear an old fellow railing at love.

PUZZLETEXT. It is like a young fellow's railing at age.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Or a courtier out of place at court.

AIR V. *Sir Thomas I cannot.*

The worn-out rake at pleasure rails,
And cries, 'Tis all idle and fleeting;
At court, the man, whose interest fails,
Cries, All is corruption, and cheating:
But would you know
Whence both these flow?
Though so much they pretend to abhor 'em
That rails at court,
This at love's sport,
Because they are neither fit for 'em,
fit for 'em,
Because they are neither fit for 'em.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Besides, doctor, I fancy you have not always governed your own passions, though you are so fond of correcting others: as a poet burlesques the nonsense of others, while he writes greater nonsense himself——

PUZZLETEXT. Or as a prude corrects the vices of others, while she is more vicious herself.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Or as a parson preaches against drinking, and then goes to the alehouse.

PUZZLETEXT. Very true—if you mean a Presbyterian parson.

AIR VI. *One evening having lost my way.*

I've heard a non-con, parson preach
'Gainst whoring, with just disdain;
Whilst he himself to be naught did teach
Of females as large a train
As stars in the sky, or lamps in the street,
Or beauties in the Mall we meet,
Or as—or as—or as,
Or as the whores in Drury Lane.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Thy similes are all froth, like bottled ale——and it is as difficult to get thee out of a simile, as out of an alehouse.

AIR VII. *Dutch skipper.*

PUZ. The gaudy sun adorning
With brightest rays the morning,
the morning,
Shines o'er the eastern hill;
And I will go a sporting,
OWEN. And I will go a courting,
a courting,
There lies my pleasure still.
PUZ. In Gaffer Woodford's ground
A brushing hare is found,
A course which even kings themselves might see;
OWEN. And in another place
There lies a brushing lass,
Which will give one ten times more sport than she.

Second Part.

PUZ. What pleasure to see, while the greyhounds are running,
Poor puss's cunning and shifting and shunning!
To see with what art she plays still her part,
And leaves her pursuers afar:
First this way, then that;
First a stretch, and then squat,
Till quite out of breath,
She yields her to death.
What joy with the sportsman's compare?
OWEN. How sweet to behold the soft blooming lass,
With blushing face, clasped close in embrace!
To feel her breasts rise, see joy fill her eyes,

And glut on her heaven of charms!
While sighing and whining,
And twisting and twining,
With kissing and pressing,
And fondest caressing,
With raptures she dies in your arms. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

SWEETISSA *and* MARGERY.

SWEETISSA. If ever you had known what it was to love, Margery, you would not have wondered how I could prefer a man to his master.

MARGERY. I should not have wondered indeed, if our young squire had been like most young country squires—But he is a fine gentleman, Sweetissa.

SWEETISSA. From such fine gentlemen, may my stars deliver me, Margery.

MARGERY. What, I suppose you are afraid of being made jealous, by his running after other women.

SWEETISSA. Pshaw! I should not think him worth being jealous of—he runs after every woman he sees; and yet, I believe, scarce knows what a woman is,—Either he has more affectation than desire, or more desire than capacity. O Margery, when I was in London with madam, I have seen several such sparks as these; some of them would attempt making love too——Nay, I have had such lovers!—But I could never find one of them that would stand it out.

AIR VIII. *Bessy Bell and Mary Gray.*

In long pig-tails and shining lace,
Our beaus set out a-wooing;
Ye widows, never show them grace,
But laugh at their pursuing.

But let the daw, that shines so bright,
Of borrowed plumes bereft be,
Alas! poor dame, how naked the sight!
You'll find there's nothing left ye.

Oh Margery! there is more in Robin's little finger than in a beau's whole body.

MARGERY. Yes, and more roguery in him than—

SWEETISSA. I know you are prejudiced against him from what William says; but be assured that is all malice; he is desirous of getting his place.

MARGERY. I rather think that a prejudice of yours against William.

SWEETISSA. O Margery, Margery! an upper servant's honesty is never so conspicuous, as when he is abused by the under-servants.—They must rail at some one, and if they abuse him, he preserves his master and mistress from abuse.

MARGERY. Well, I would not have such a sweetheart.

SWEETISSA. Pugh! if all you say were true, what is it to me? If women were to consider the roguery of their lovers, we should have even fewer matches among people of quality than we have.

AIR IX. *Mad Moll.*

Why should not I love Robin?
And why should not Bob love me?
While every one else he is fobbing,
He still may be honest to me.

For though his master he cheats,
His mistress shares what he gains;
And whilst I am tasting the sweets,
The devil take her who complains.

MARG. But should he be taken indeed;
Ah! think what a shame it would be
To have your love dragged out of bed,
And thence in a cart to the tree.

SWEET. Let halters tie up the poor cheat,
Who only deserves to be hanged;
The wit who can get an estate,
Hath still too much wit to be hanged.

But I don't speak this on Robin's account; for if all my master's ancestors had met with as good servants as Robin, he had enjoyed a better estate than he hath now.

SCENE VI.

ROBIN *and* SWEETISSA.

AIR X. *Masquerade minuet.*

ROBIN. Oh my Sweetissa!
Give me a kiss-a,
Oh what a bliss-a
To behold your charms!
My eyes with gazing
Are set a blazing,
SWEET. Come then and quench them within my arms.

ROBIN. Oh my Sweetissa! thou art straighter than the straightest tree—sweeter than the sweetest flower—thy hand is as white as milk, and as warm; thy breast is as white as snow, and as cold.—Thou art, to sum thee up at once, an olio of perfections; or, in other words, a garden of bliss which my soul delights to walk in.—Oh! I will take such strides about thy form, such vast, such mighty strides—

SWEETISSA. Oh Robin! it is as impossible to tell thee how much I love thee, as it is to tell—how much water there is in the sea.

ROBIN. My dear Sweetissa! had I the learning of the author of that opera-book in the parlour-window, I could not make a simile to my love.

SWEETISSA. Be assured there shall be no love lost between us.

AIR XI. *Young Damon once the happiest swain.*

When mutual passion hath possessed,
With equal flame, each amorous breast,
How sweet's the rapt'rous kiss?
While each with soft contention strive,
Which highest ecstasies shall give,
Or be more mad with bliss!

ROBIN. Oh my Sweetissa! how impatient am I till the parson hath stitched us together; then, my dear, nothing but the scissors of the fates should ever cut us asunder.

SWEETISSA. How charming is thy voice! sweeter than bagpipes to my ear: I could listen ever.

ROBIN. And I could view thee ever: thy face is brighter than the brightest silver. O could I rub my silver to be as bright as thy dear face, I were a butler indeed!

SWEETISSA. Oh Robin! there is no rubbing on my face; the colour which I have, nature, not art, hath given; for on my honour, during the whole time I have lived with my mistress, out of all the pots of paint which I have plastered on her face, I never stole a bit to plaster on my own.

ROBIN. Adieu, my dear, I must go whet my knives; by that time the parson will be returned from coursing, and we will be married this morning.—Oh Sweetissa! it is easier to fathom the depth of the bottomless sea than my love.

SWEETISSA. Or to fathom the depth of a woman's bottomless conscience than to tell thee mine.

ROBIN. Mine is as deep as the knowledge of physicians.
SWEETISSA. Mine as the projects of statesmen.
ROBIN. Mine as the virtue of whores.
SWEETISSA. Mine as the honesty of lawyers.
ROBIN. Mine as the piety of priests.
SWEETISSA. Mine as—I know not what.
ROBIN. Mine as—as—as—I'gad I don't know what.

AIR XII. *All in the Downs.*

Would you my love in words displayed,
A language must be coined to tell;
No word for such a passion's made,
For no one ever loved so well.
Nothing, oh! nothing's like my love for you,
And so my dearest, and so my dearest, and my dear, adieu.

SCENE VII.

SWEETISSA *and* MARGERY.

SWEETISSA. Oh my Margery! if this fit of love continues, how happy shall I be!

MARGERY. Ay, it will continue the usual time, I warrant you, during the honeymoon.

SWEETISSA. Call it the honey-year, the honey-age. Oh, Margery! sure never woman loved as I do!—though I am to be married this morning, still it seems long to me. To a mind in love, sure an hour before marriage seems a month.

MARGERY. Ay, my dear, and many an hour after marriage seems a twelvemonth; it is the only thing wherein the two states agree; for we generally wish ourselves into it, and wish ourselves out of it.

SWEETISSA. And then into it again; which makes one poet say, love is like the wind.

MARGERY. Another, that it is like the sea.
SWEETISSA. A third, a weathercock.
MARGERY. A fourth, a Jack with a lanthorn.
SWEETISSA. In short, it is like everything.
MARGERY. And like nothing at all.

AIR XIII. *Ye nymphs and sylvan gods.*

How odd a thing is love,
Which the poets fain would prove
To be this and that,
And the Lord knows what,
Like all things below and above
But believe a maid,
Skilled enough in the trade
Its mysteries to explain;
'Tis a gentle dart,
That tickles the heart,
And though it gives us smart,
Does joys impart,
Which largely requite all the pain.

MARGERY. Oh, my dear! whilst you have been singing, see what I have discovered!

SWEETISSA. It is a woman's hand, and not my own. [*Reads.*] Oh, my Margery! now I am undone indeed.—Robin is false, he has lain with, and left our Susan.

MARGERY. How!

SWEETISSA. This letter comes from her, to upbraid him with it.

MARGERY. Then you have reason to thank fate for this timely discovery.——What would it avail you to have found it out when you were married to him?—When you had been his wife, what would it have profited you to have known he had another?

SWEETISSA. True, true, Margery; when once a woman is married, 'tis too late to discover faults.

AIR XIV. *Red house.*

Ye virgins who would marry,
Ere you choose, be wary,
If you'd not miscarry,
Be inclined to doubting:
Examine well your lover,
His vices to discover,
With caution con him over,
And turn quite inside out him;
But wedding past,
The stocking cast,
The guests all gone,
The curtain drawn,
Be henceforth blind,
Be very kind,
And find no faults about him.

SWEETISSA. Oh Margery! I am resolved never to see Robin more.

MARGERY. Keep that resolution, and you will be happy.

SCENE VIII.

ROBIN. How truly does the book say—hours to men in love are like years. Oh for a shower of rain to send the parson home from coursing, before the canonical hours are over!—Ha! what paper is this?—The hand of our William is on the superscription.

To MRS. SWEETISSA.

"MADAM,—Hoping that you are not quite de-t-e-r-ter-m-i-n-e-ed, determined to marry our Robin, this comes for

to let you know"—[I'll read no more: can there be such falsehood in mankind?—I find footmen are as great rogues as their masters; and henceforth I'll look for no more honesty under a livery, than an embroidered coat—but let me see again!—] "to let you know I am ready to fulfil my promise to you."

Ha! she too is guilty.—Chambermaids are as bad as their ladies, and the whole world is one nest of rogues.

AIR XV. *Black Joke.*

The more we know of human kind,
The more deceits and tricks we find
  In every land as well as Wales;
For would you see no roguery thrive,
Upon the mountains you must live,
  For rogues abound in all the vales.

The master and the man will nick,
The mistress and the maid will trick;
  For rich and poor
  Are rogue and whore,
There's not one honest man in a score,
Nor woman true in twenty-four.

SCENE IX.

ROBIN *and* JOHN.

ROBIN. Oh John! thou best of friends! come to my arms —For thy sake I will still believe there is one honest—one honest man in the world.

JOHN. What means our Robin?

ROBIN. O my friend! Sweetissa is false, and I'm undone—let this letter explain the rest.

JOHN. Ha! and is William at the bottom of all?—Our William who used to rail against women and matrimony! Oh! 'tis too true what our parson says, there's no belief in man.

ROBIN. Nor woman neither.——John, art thou my friend?

JOHN. When did Robin ask me what I have not done?—Have I not left my horses undrest, to whet thy knives?—Have I not left my stable uncleaned, to clean thy spoons? And even the bay stone-horse unwatered, to wash thy glasses!

ROBIN. Then thou shalt carry a challenge for me to William.

JOHN. Oh Robin! consider what our parson says—We must not revenge, but forget and forgive.

ROBIN. Let our parson say what he will.—When did he himself forgive? Did he forgive Gaffer Jobson having wronged him of two cocks of hay in five load?—Did he forgive Gammer Sowgrunt for having wronged him of a tythe-pig?——Did he forgive Susan Foulmouth, for telling him he loved the cellar better than his pulpit?—No, no, let him preach up forgiveness, he forgives nobody.—So I will follow his example, not his precepts.—Had he hit me a slap in the face, I could have put up with it.—Had he stole a silver spoon, and laid the blame on me, though I had been turned away, I could have forgiven him. But to try to rob me of my love—that, that, our John, I never can forgive him.

AIR XVI. *Tippling John.*

The dog his bit
Will often quit,
A battle to eschew;
The cock his corn,
Will leave in barn,
Another cock in view.

One man will eat
Another's meat,
And no contention seen;
Since all agree
'Tis best to be,
Though hungry, in a whole skin.
But should each spy,
His mistress by,
A rival move his suit,
He quits his fears,
And by the ears
They fall together to't.
A rival shocks,
Men, dogs, and cocks,
And makes the gentlest froward;
He who won't fight
For mistress bright,
Is something worse than coward

JOHN. Nay, to say the truth, thou hast reason on thy side. Fare thee well.—I'll go deliver thy message, and thou shalt find I will behave myself like a Welshman, and thy friend.

SCENE X.

ROBIN. Now were it not for the sin of self-murder, would I go hang myself at the next tree.—Yes, Sweetissa, I would hang myself, and haunt thee.—Oh woman, woman! is this the return you make true love?—No man is sure of his mistress, till he has gotten her with child.—A lover should act like a boy at school, who spits in his porridge that no one may take it from him.—Should William have been beforehand with me—Oh!

SCENE XI.

ROBIN *and* SWEETISSA.

SWEETISSA. Oh! the perjury of men! I find dreams do not always go by contraries; for I dreamt last night, that I saw our Robin married to another.

[*A long silence, and walking by one another, she takes out her handkerchief, and bursts out a crying.*

ROBIN. Your crying won't do, madam; I can tell you that.—I have been fool long enough—I have been cheated by your tears too often, to believe them any longer.

SWEETISSA. Oh barbarous, perfidious, cruel wretch!—Oh! I shall break my heart—Oh!

ROBIN. No, no, your heart is like a green stick, you may bend it, but cannot break it.—It will bend like a willow, and twist around any one.

SWEETISSA. Monster! monster!

ROBIN. Better language would show better breeding.

AIR XVII. *Hedge Lane.*

ROBIN. Indeed, my dear,
With sigh and tear,
Your point you will not carry;
I'd rather eat
The offal meat,
Than others' leavings marry.

SWEETISS Villain, well
You would conceal
Your falsehood by such catches;
Alas! too true
I've been to you,
Thou very wretch of wretches.

Well you know
What I might do,
Would I but with young master.

ROBIN. Pray be still,
Since by our Will,
You're now with child of bastard.

SWEETISSA. I with child?

ROBIN. Yes, you with child.

SWEETISSA. I with child, you villain?

ROBIN. Yes, you,
Madam, you,
Are now with child by William.

It is equal to me with whom you play your pranks; and I'd as lieve be my master's cuckold as my fellow-servant's ——Nay, I had rather, for I could make him pay for it.

SWEETISSA. Oh, most inhuman! dost thou not expect the ceiling to fall down on thy head, for so notorious a lie? Dost thou believe in the Bible? Dost thou believe there is such a thing as the Devil? Dost thou believe there is such a place as Hell?

ROBIN. Yes, I do, madam; and you will find there is such a place to your cost.—Oh, Sweetissa, Sweetissa! that a woman could hear herself asked in church to one man, when she knew she had to do with another?

SWEETISSA. I had to do with another?

ROBIN. You, madam, you.

SWEETISSA. I had to do with Will?

ROBIN. Yes, you had to do with Will.

AIR XVIII. *Lord Biron's Maggot.*

SWEET. Sure nought so disastrous can woman befall,
As to be a good virgin, and thought none at all.
Had William but pleased me,
It never had teased me
To hear a forsaken man bawl.

But from you this abuse,
For whose sake and whose use
I have safe corked my maidenhead up;
How must it shock my ear!
For what woman can bear
To be called a vile drunkard,
And told of the tankard,
Before she has swallowed a cup?

ROBIN. O Sweetissa, Sweetissa! well thou knowest that, wert thou true, I'd not have sold thee for five hundred pounds. But why do I argue longer with an ungrateful woman, who is not only false, but triumphs in her falsehood; her falsehood to one who hath been too true to her. Since you can be so base, I shall tell you what I never did intend to tell you—When I was in London, I might have had an affair with a lady, and slighted her for you.

SWEETISSA. A lady! I might have had three lords in one afternoon; nay, more than that, I refused a man with a thing over his shoulder like a scarf at a burying for you; and these men, they say, are the greatest men in the kingdom.

ROBIN. O Sweetissa! the very hand-irons thou didst rub, before thou wast preferred to wait on thy lady, have not more brass in them than thy forehead.

SWEETISSA. O Robin, Robin! the great silver candlesticks in thy custody are not more hollow than thou art.

ROBIN. O Sweetissa! the paint, nay, the eyebrows that thou puttest on thy mistress are not more false than thou.

SWEETISSA. Thou hast as many mistresses as there are glasses on thy sideboard.

ROBIN. And thou lovers as thy mistress has patches.

SWEETISSA. If I have, you will have but a small share.

ROBIN. The better my fortune.——To lose a wife when you have had her is to get out of misfortune——to lose one before you get her is to escape it; especially if it be one that somebody has had before you.—He that marries pays the price of virtue.—Whores are to be had cheaper.

AIR XIX. *Do not ask me.*

A woman's ware like china,
  Once flawed is good for nought;
When whole, though worth a guinea,
  When broke's not worth a groat.
A woman at St. James's
  With guineas you obtain,
But stay till lost her fame is,
  She'll be cheap in Drury Lane.

SCENE XII.

SWEETISSA *and* MARGERY.

SWEETISSA. Ungrateful, barbarous wretch.

MARGERY. What is the matter?

SWEETISSA. Oh, Margery! Robin——

MARGERY. What more of him?

SWEETISSA. O! worse than you can imagine—worse than I could have dreaded: Oh, he has sullied my virtue!

MARGERY. How! your virtue?

SWEETISSA. Yes, Margery, that virtue which I kept locked up as in a cupboard; that very virtue he has abused —he has barbarously insinuated to be no virtue at all.—— Oh, I could have borne any fate but this;——I that would have carried a knapsack through the world, so that my virtue had been safe within it——I that would have rather been the poorest man's wife than the richest man's whore——To be called the miss of a footman that would not be the miss of a king!

MARGERY. It is a melancholy thing indeed.

SWEETISSA. O Margery! men do not sufficiently understand the value of virtue.——Even footmen learn to go a whoring of their masters——and virtue will shortly be of no use but to stop bottles.

AIR XX. *Tweed-side.*

What woman her virtue would keep,
When nought by her virtue she gains?
While she lulls her soft passions asleep,
She's thought but a fool for her pains.
Since valets, who learn their lords' wit,
Our virtue a bauble can call,
Why should we our ladies' steps quit,
Or have any virtue at all?

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The fields.*

MR. APSHONES *and* MOLLY.

MR. APSHONES. I tell you, daughter, I am doubtful whether his designs be honourable: there is no trusting these fluttering fellows; they place as much glory in winning a poor girl, as a soldier does in conquering a town. Nay, their very parents often encourage them in it; and when they have brought up a boy to flatter and deceive the women, they think they have given him a good education, and call him a fine gentleman.

MOLLY. Do not, dear sir, suspect my Owen: he is made of a gentler nature.

MR. APSHONES. And yet I have heard that that gentle gentleman, when he was at London, rummaged all the play-houses for mistresses: nay, you yourself have heard of his pranks in the parish; did he not seduce the fiddler's daughter?

MOLLY. That was the fiddler's fault; you know he sold his daughter, and gave a receipt for the money.

MR. APSHONES. Hath he not made mischief between several men and their wives? And do you not know that he lusts after every woman he sees, though the poor wretch does not look as if he was quite come from nurse yet?

MOLLY. Sure angels cannot have more sweetness in their looks than he.

MR. APSHONES. Angels! baboons! these are the creatures that resembles our beaus the most. If they have any sweetness in them, 'tis from the same reason that an orange hath. Why have our women fresher complexions and more health in their countenances here than in London, but because we have fewer beaus among us; in that I will have you think no more of him! for I have no design upon him, and I will prevent his designs upon you. If he comes here any more I will acquaint his mother.

MOLLY. Be first assured that his designs are not honourable, before you rashly ruin them.

MR. APSHONES. I will consent to no clandestine affair. Let the great rob one another, and us, if they please; I will show them the poor can be honest. I desire only to preserve my daughter, let them preserve their son.

MOLLY. O, sir, would you preserve your daughter, you must preserve her love.

AIR XXI.

So deep within your Molly's heart,
  Her Owen's image lies,
That if with Owen she must part,
  Your wretched daughter dies.
Thus when unto the soldier's breast
  The arrow flies too sure,
When thence its fatal point you wrest,
  Death is his only cure.

MR. APSHONES. Pugh, pugh, you must cure one love by another: I have a new sweetheart for you——and I'll throw you in a new suit of clothes into the bargain——which, I can tell you, is enough to balance the affections of women of much higher rank than yourself.

MOLLY. Nothing can recompense the loss of my Owen; and as to what he loses by me, my behaviour shall make him amends.

MR. APSHONES. Poor girl! how ignorant she is of the world; but little she knows that no qualities can make amends for the want of fortune, and that fortune makes a sufficient amends for the want of every good quality.

MOLLY. My dear Owen, I am sure, will think otherwise.

AIR XXII. *Let ambition fire the mind.*

Happy with the man I love,
I 'll obsequious watch his will;
Hottest pleasures I shall prove,
While his pleasures I fulfil.
Dames, by proudest titles known,
Shall desire what we possess;
And while they'd less happy own
Grandeur is not happiness.

MR. APSHONES. I will hear no more—remember what I have said, and study to be dutiful—or you are no child of mine.

MOLLY. Oh! unhappy wretch that I am: I must have no husband, or no father—What shall I do—or whither shall I turn? Love pleads strong for a husband, duty for a father—yes, and duty for a husband too; but then what is one who is already so?—Well then, I will antedate my duty. I will think him my husband before he is so. But should he then prove false—and when I've lost my father, should I lose my husband too, that is impossible—falsehood and he are incompatible.

AIR XXIII. *Sweet are the charms.*

Beauties shall quit their darling town,
  Lovers shall leave the fragrant shades,
Doctors upon the fee shall frown,
  Parsons shall hate the masquerades;
    Nay, ere I think of Owen ill,
    Women shall leave their dear quadrille.

SCENE II.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN, MOLLY.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. My dear Molly, let not the reflection on my past gaieties give thee any uneasiness; be assured I have long been tired with variety, and I find after all the changes I have run through both of women and clothes—a man hath need of no more than one woman and one suit at a time.

AIR XXIV. *Under the greenwood-tree.*

To wanton pleasures, roving charms,
  I bid a long adieu,
While wrapt within my Molly's arms,
  I find enough in you.
By houses this, by horses that,
  By clothes a third's undone,
While this abides—the second rides,
  The third can wear but one.

MOLLY. My dear, I will believe thee, and am resolved from this day forward to run all the hazards of my life

with thee.—Let thy rich parents or my poor parents say what they will, let us henceforth have no other desire than to make one another parents.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. With all my heart, my dear; and the sooner we begin to love—the sooner we shall be so.

MOLLY. Begin to love!—Alas, my dear, is it now to begin?———

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Not the theory of love, my angel—to that I have long been an apprentice; so long that I now desire to set up my trade.

MOLLY. Let us then to the parson—I am as willing to be married as thou art.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Why the parson, my dear?——

MOLLY. We can't be married without him.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. No, but we can love without him; and what have we to do with marriage while we can love?—Marriage is but a dirty road to love—and those are happiest who arrive at love without travelling through it.

AIR XXV. *Dearest charmer.*

Will you still bid me tell,
What you discern so well
By my expiring sighs,
My doating eyes?
Look through th' instructive grove,
Each object prompts to love,
Hear how the turtles coo,
All nature tells you what to do.

MOLLY. Too well I understand you now—No, no, however dirty the road of marriage be—I will to love no other way—Alas! there is no other way but one—and that is dirtier still—None travel through it without sullying their reputations beyond the possibility of cleaning.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. When cleanliness is out of fashion, who would desire to be clean?—And when ladies of quality appear with dirty reputations, why should you fear a little spot on yours?

MOLLY. Ladies of quality may wear bad reputations as well as bad clothes, and be admired in both—but women of lower rank must be decent, or they will be disregarded; for no woman can pass without one good quality, unless she be a woman of very great quality.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. You judge too severely.—Nature never prompts us to a real crime: it is the imposition of a priest, not nature's voice, which bars us from a pleasure allowed to every beast but man—but why do I this to convince thee by arguments of what thou art sufficiently certain? Why should I refute your tongue, when your fond eyes refute it?

AIR XXVI. *Canny Boatman.*

How can I trust your words precise.
My soft desires denying,
When, Oh! I read within your eyes,
Your tender heart complying.
Your tongue may cheat,
And with deceit,
Your softer wishes cover;
But Oh! your eyes
Know no disguise,
Nor ever cheat your lover.

MOLLY. Away, false perjured barbarous wretch—is this the love you have for me, to undo me——to ruin me?

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Oh! do not take on thee thus, my dear Molly—I would sooner ruin myself than thee.

MOLLY. Ay, so it appears.—Oh! fool that I was to think thou couldst be constant who hast ruined so many women—to think that thou ever didst intend to marry me, who hast long been practised in the arts of seducing our sex—Hence-

forth I will sooner think it possible for butter to come when the witch is in the churn—for hay to dry in the rain—for wheat to be ripe at Christmas—for cheese to be made without milk—for a barn to be free from mice—for a warren to be free from rats—for a cherry orchard to be free from blackbirds—or for a churchyard to be free from ghosts, as for a young man to be free from falsehood.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Be not enraged, my sweetest dear.—Let me kiss away thy passion.

MOLLY. Avaunt—a blight is in thy kiss—thy breath is the wind of wantonness—and virtue cannot grow near thee.

AIR XXVII. *I'll range around.*

Since you so base and faithless be,
And would—without marrying me,
A maid I'll go to Pluto's shore,
Nor think of men or—marriage more.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. You'll repent that resolution before you get half-way——She'll go pout and pine away half an hour by herself, then relapse into a fit of fondness, and be all my own.

AIR XXVIII. *Chloe is false.*

Women in vain love's powerful torrent
With unequal strength oppose;
Reason a while may stem the strong current,
Love still at last her soul o'erflows;
Pleasures inviting,
Passions exciting,
Her lover charms her,
Of pride disarms her,
Down she goes.

SCENE III.—*A Field.*

ROBIN, WILLIAM, JOHN, THOMAS.

WILLIAM. Here's as proper a place as can be for our business.

ROBIN. The sooner the better.

JOHN. Come, Thomas, thou and I will not be idle.

THOMAS. I'll take a knock or two for love, with all my heart.

AIR XXIX. *Britons strike home.*

WILLIAM. Robin, come on, come on, come on,
As soon as you please.
ROBIN. Will, I will hit thee a slap in the,
Slap in the, slap in the face.
WILLIAM. Would, would I could see it,
I would with both feet
Give thee such a kick by the by.
ROBIN. If you dare, sir, do.
WILLIAM. Why do not, sir, you?
ROBIN. I'm ready, I'm ready,
WILLIAM. And so am I too.

THOMAS. You must fight to some other tune, or you will never fight at all.

SCENE IV.

ROBIN, WILLIAM, JOHN, THOMAS, SUSAN.

SUSAN. What are you doing, you set of lazy rascals?—Do you consider my master will be at home within these two hours, and find nothing ready for his supper?

WILLIAM. Let my master come when he will——If he keeps Robin, I am free to go as soon as he pleases; Robin and I will not live in one house together.

SUSAN. Why, what's the matter?

ROBIN. He wanted to get my mistress from me, that's all.

WILLIAM. You lie, sirrah, you lie.

ROBIN. Who do you call liar, you blockhead?——I say, you lie.

WILLIAM. And I say you lie.

ROBIN. And you lie.

WILLIAM. And I say you lie again.

ROBIN. The devil take the greatest liar, I say.

AIR XXX. *Mother, quoth Hodge.*

SUSAN. Oh fie upon 't, Robin, Oh fie upon 't, Will,
What language like this, what scullion defames?
'Twere better your tongues should ever be still,
Than always be scolding and calling vile names.

WILLIAM. 'Twas he that lies
Did first devise,
The first words were his, and the last shall be mine.

ROBIN. You kiss my dog.

WILLIAM. You're a sly dog.

ROBIN. Loggerhead.

WILLIAM. Blockhead.

ROBIN. Fool.

WILLIAM. Fox.

ROBIN. Swine.

WILLIAM. Sirrah, I'll make you repent you ever quarrelled with me.—I will tell my master of two silver spoons you stole—I'll discover your tricks—your selling of glasses, and pretending the frost broke them—making master brew more beer than he needed, and then giving it away to your

own family; especially to feed the great swollen belly of that fat-gutted brother of yours—who gets drunk twice a day at master's expense.

ROBIN. Ha, ha, ha! And is this all?

WILLIAM. No, sirrah, it is not all—then there's your filing the plate, and when it was found lighter, pretended that it was wasted in cleaning; and your bills for tutty and rotten-stone, when you used nothing but poor whiting. Sirrah, you have been such a rogue, that you have stole above half my master's plate, and spoiled the rest.

SUSAN. Fie upon 't, William, what have we to do with master's losses? He is rich, and can afford it.—Don't let us quarrel among ourselves—let us stand by one another—for, let me tell you, if matters were to be too nicely examined into, I am afraid it would go hard with us all—Wise servants always stick close to one another, like plums in a pudding that's overwetted, says Susan the cook.

JOHN. Or horse in a stable that's on fire——says John the groom.

THOMAS. Or grapes upon a wall—says Thomas the gardener.

SUSAN. Every servant should be sauce to his fellow-servant——as sauce disguises the faults of a dish—so should he theirs.——O William, were we all to have our deserts, we should be finely roasted indeed.

AIR XXXI. *Dame of Honour.*

A wise man others' faults conceals
  His own to get more clear of;
While folly all she knows reveals,
  Sure what she does to hear of.
The parson and the lawyer 's blind,
  Each to his brother's erring——
For should you search, he knows you'd find
  No barrel the better herring.

AIR XXXII. *We have cheated the Parson.*

ROBIN. Here stands honest Bob, who ne'er in his life
Was known to be guilty of faction and strife.
But oh what can
Appease the man,
Who would rob me of both my place and my wife.

WILLIAM. If you prove it, I will be hanged, and that's fair.

ROBIN. I've that in my pocket will make it appear.

WILLIAM. Pry'thee what?

ROBIN. Ask you that,
When you know you have written against me so flat?

Here is your hand, though there is not your name to it—is not this your hand, sir?

WILLIAM. I don't think it worth my while to tell you whether it is or no.

ROBIN. Was it not enough to try to supplant me in my place, but you must try to get my mistress?

WILLIAM. Your mistress—any man may have your mistress that can outbid you, for it is very well known you never had a mistress without paying for her.

ROBIN. But perhaps you may find me too cunning for you, and while you are attempting my place, you may lose your own.

AIR XXXIII. *Hark, hark, the cock crows.*

WILLIAM. When master thinks fit,
I am ready to quit
A place I so little regard, sir;
For while thou art here,
No merit must e'er

Expect to find any reward, sir.
The groom that is able
To manage his stable,
Of places enough need not doubt, sir;
But you, my good brother,
Will scarce find another,
If master should e'er turn you out, sir.

SUSAN. If you can't be friends without it, you had best fight it out once for all.

WILLIAM. Ay——so say I.

ROBIN. No, no, I am for no fighting; it is but a word and a blow with William; he would set the whole parish together by the ears, if he could; and it is very well known what difficulties I have been put to to keep peace in it.

WILLIAM. I suppose peace-making is one of the secret services you have done master——for they are such secrets, that your friend the devil can hardly discover—and whence does your peace-making arise, but from your fears of getting a black eye, or bloody nose, in the squabble?—for if you could set the whole parish a boxing, without boxing yourself, it is well known you would do it, sirrah, sirrah——had your love for the tenants been the occasion of your peace-making, as you call it, you would not be always making master so hard upon them in every court; and prevent him giving them the fat ox at Christmas, on pretence of good husbandry.

ROBIN. Yours you have a great love for, master, we know by your driving to inch, as you do, sirrah. You are such a headstrong devil, that you will overturn the coach one day or other, and break both master and mistress's necks; it is always neck or nothing with you.

SUSAN. Oh fie! William, pray let me be the mediator between you.

ROBIN. Ay, ay, let Susan be the mediator, I'll refer my cause to any one—it is equal to me.

WILLIAM. No, no, I shall not refer an affair, wherein my honour is so concerned, to a woman.

AIR XXXIV. *Of a noble race was Shinken.*

Good madam Cook, the greasy,
Pray leave your saucy bawling,
Let all your toil
Be to make the pot boil,
For that's your proper calling.

With men as wise as Robin,
A female judge may pass, sir;
For where the grey mare
Is the better horse, there
The horse is but an ass, sir.

SCENE V.

ROBIN, THOMAS, SUSAN.

SUSAN. Saucy fellow.

THOMAS. I suppose he is gone to inform master against you.

ROBIN. Let him go, I am too well with madam to fear any mischief he can make with master.—And harkye, between you and I, madam won't suffer me to be turned out—— you heard William upbraid me with stealing the beer for my own family; but she knows half of it hath gone to her own private cellar, where she and the parson sit and drink, and meditate ways to propagate religion in the parish——

SUSAN. Don't speak against madam, Robin——she is an exceeding good woman to her own servants.

ROBIN. Ay, ay, to us upper servants—we that keep the keys fare well enough——and for the rest, let them starve for Robin.——It's the way of the world, Susan; the heads of all professions thrive, while the others starve.

AIR XXXV. *Pierot's Tune.*

Great courtiers palaces contain,
  While small ones fear the gaol,
Great parsons riot in champagne,
  Small parsons sot on ale;
Great whores in coaches gang,
    Smaller misses,
    For their kisses,
Are in Bridewell banged;
    While in vogue
    Lives the great rogue,
Small rogues are by dozens hanged.

SCENE VI.

SUSAN, SWEETISSA.

SWEETISSA. Oh, brave Susan! what, you are resolved to keep open doings: when a woman goes without the precincts of virtue, she never knows where to stop.

AIR XXXVI. *Country Garden.*

Virtue within a woman's heart,
  By nature's hand is rammed in,
There must be kept by steady art,
  Like water when it's damned in;
    But the dam once broken,
    Past all revoking,
Virtue flies off in a minute;
    Like a river left,
    Of waters bereft,
Each man may venture in it.

SUSAN. I hope you will pardon my want of capacity, madam, but I don't know what you mean.

SWEETISSA. Your capacity is too capacious——madam.

SUSAN. Your method of talking, madam, is something dark.

SWEETISSA. Your method of acting is darker, madam.

SUSAN. I dare appeal to the whole world for the justification of my actions, madam; and I defy any one to say my fame is more sullied than my plates, madam.

SWEETISSA. Your pots you mean——madam: if you are like any plates, it is soup-plates, which any man may put his spoon into.

SUSAN. Me, madam?

SWEETISSA. You, madam.

AIR XXXVII. *Dainty Davy.*

SUSAN. What the devil mean you thus
Scandal scattering,
Me bespattering,
Dirty slut, and ugly puss,
What can be your meaning?

SWEET. Had you, madam, not forgot,
When with Bob you—you know what,
Surely, madam, you would not,
Twice inquire my meaning.

There, read that letter, and be satisfied how base you have been to a woman, to whom you have professed a friendship.

SUSAN. What do you mean by offering me a letter to read? when you know——

SWEETISSA. When I know you writ it, madam.

SUSAN. When you know I can neither write nor read, madam.—It was my parents' fault, not mine, that gave me not a better education; and if you had not been taught to

write, you would have been no more able to write than myself—though you barbarously upbraid me with what is not my fault.

SWEETISSA. How?—and is it possible you can neither read nor write?

SUSAN. Possible!—why should it be impossible for a servant not to be able to write—when so many gentlemen can't spell——

SWEETISSA. Here is your name to a love-letter, which is directed to Robin—wherein you complain of his having left you, after he had enjoyed you.——

SUSAN. Enjoyed me!

SWEETISSA. It is so, I assure you.——

SUSAN. If ever I had any thing to say to Robin——but as one fellow servant might, say not to another fellow-servant, may my pot ne'er boil again!

SWEETISSA. I am sorry you cannot read, that you might see the truth of what I say, that you might read Susan Roastmeat in plain letters; and if you did not write it yourself, sure the devil must have writ it for you.——

SUSAN. I think I have said enough to satisfy you,—and as much as is consistent with my honour.

SWEETISSA. You have, indeed, to satisfy me of your innocence——nor do I think it inconsistent with my honour to assure you I am sorry I said what I said—I do, and humbly ask your pardon, madam.

SUSAN. Dear madam, this acknowledgment from you is sufficient—Oh! Sweetissa, had I been one of those, I might have had to do with my young master.

SWEETISSA. Nay, for that matter, we might all have had to do with my young master; that argues little in your defence——but this I am assured of—if you cannot write at all—you did not write the letter.

AIR XXXVIII. *Valentine's day.*

A woman must her honour save,
While she 's a virgin found;
And he can hardly be a knave
Who is not worth a pound.

On horseback he who cannot ride,
On horseback did not rob;
And since a pen you cannot guide,
You never wrote to Bob.

SCENE VII.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* MR. APSHONES.

MR. APSHONES. I desire not, Mr. Owen, that you would marry my daughter; I had rather see her married to one of her own degree.——I had rather have a set of fine healthy grandchildren ask me blessing, than a poor puny breed of half-begotten brats—that inherit the diseases as well as the titles of their parents.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Pshaw, pshaw, master Apshones, these are the narrow sentiments of such old fellows as you, that have either never known or forgotten the world, that think their daughters going out of the world, if they go five miles from them——and had rather see them walk a foot at home than ride in a coach abroad.

MR. APSHONES. I would not see her ride in her coach this year, to see her ride in an hearse the next.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. You may never arrive to that honour, good sir.

MR. APSHONES. I would not advise you to attempt bringing any dishonour on us——that may not be so safe as you imagine.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. So safe!

MR. APSHONES. No, not so safe, sir,——I have not lost my spirit with my fortune; I am your father's tenant, but not his slave.——Though you have ruined many poor girls with impunity, you may not always succeed so——for, let me tell you, sir, whoever brings dishonour on me, shall bring ruin on himself.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Ha—ha—ha!

MR. APSHONES. I believe both Sir Owen and her ladyship too good people to suffer you in these practices, were they acquainted with them——Sir Owen hath still behaved as the best of landlords; he knows a landlord should protect, not prey on his tenants—should be the shepherd, not the wolf to his flock; but one would have thought you imagined we lived under that barbarous custom—I have read of—when the landlord was entitled to the maidenheads of all his tenants' daughters.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Ha, ha, ha! thou art a very ridiculous, comical, odd sort of an old fellow, faith.

MR. APSHONES. It is very likely you and I may appear in the same light to one another.—Your dress would have made as ridiculous a figure in my young days as mine does now. What is the meaning of all that plastering upon your wigs? unless you would insinuate that your brains lie on the outside of your heads.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Your daughter likes our dress, if you don't.

MR. APSHONES. I desire you would spare my daughter, sir,—I shall take as much care of her as I can,—and if you should prevail on her to her ruin, be assured your father's estate should not secure you from my revenge.—You should find that the true spirit of English liberty acknowledges no superior equal to oppression.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. The true spirit of English liberty—ha, ha, ha!—thou art not the first father, or husband, that hath blustered in this manner, and been afterwards as quiet as a lamb.—He were a fine gallant, indeed, who would be stopped in the pursuit of his mistress by the

threatenings of her relations.—Not that I should care to venture, if I thought the fellow in earnest—but your heroes in words are never so in deeds.

AIR XXXIX. *My Chloe, why do you slight me?*

The whore of fame is jealous,
  The coward would seem brave;
For we are still most zealous
  What most we want to have.

  The madman boasts his senses,
  And he, whose chief pretence is
  To liberty's defence, is
Too oft the greatest slave.

SCENE VIII.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* MOLLY.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. She here!

MOLLY. Cruel, dost thou fly me? am I become hateful in thy sight?—are all thy wicked vows forgotten; for sure if thou didst even remember them, they would oblige thee to another behaviour.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Can you blame me for obeying your commands in shunning you? Sure you have forgotten your last vows, never to see me more.

MOLLY. Alas! you know too well that I am as insincere in every repulse to you as you have been in your advances to me. How unjustly do men accuse us of using a lover ill, when we are no sooner in his power than he uses us so?

AIR XL. *Sylvia, my dearest.*

Cruellest creature, why have you wooed me,
Why thus pursued me,
Into love's snare?
While I was cruel
I was your jewel;
Now I am kind, you bid me despair.

Nature's sweet flowers warm seasons nourish,
In summer flourish,
Winter's their bane:
Love, against nature
Checked, grows the greater;
And best is nourished with cold disdain.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. How canst thou wrong me so, my dear Molly? Your father hath been here, and insulted me in the rudest manner; but notwithstanding that I am resolved——

MOLLY. To fulfil your promise, and marry me?

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Why dost thou mention that hateful word? That, that is the cruel frost which nips the flower of love. Politeness is not a greater enemy to honesty, nor quadrille to common sense, than marriage is to love. They are fire and water, and cannot live together. Marriage is the only thing thou shouldst ask, that I would not grant.

MOLLY. And till you grant that, I will grant nothing else.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. It is for your sake I would not marry you; for I could never love, if I was confined to it.

AIR XLI.

How happy's the swain,
Whom beauty firing,

All admiring,
All desiring,
Never desiring in vain.
How happy to rove
Through sweetest bowers,
And cull the flowers
In the delicious garden of love.
How wretched the soul,
Under control.
To one poor choice confined a while,
Wanton it exerts the lass,
No, no, let the joys of my life,
Like the years in circles roll,
But since you are so ungrateful,
Since my service is so hateful,
Willing I my place forsake.

MOLLY. He's gone! he's lost for ever! irrevocably lost: Oh! virtue! where's thy force? where are those thousand charms that we are told to lie in thee, when lovers cannot see them? Should Owen e'er return, should he renew his entreaties, I fear his success; for I find every day love attains more and more ground of virtue.

AIR XLII. *Midsummer wish.*

When love is lodged within the heart
Poor virtue to the outworks flies,
The tongue in thunder takes its part,
And darts in lightning from the eyes.

From lips and eyes with gested grace,
In vain she keeps out charming him,
For love will find some weaker place
To let the dear invader in.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Sir Owen Apshinken's *House.*

Sir Owen Apshinken. [*Smoking.*] What a glorious creature was he who first discovered the use of tobacco!——the industrious retires from business——the voluptuous from pleasure——the lover from a cruel mistress——the husband from a cursed wife——and I from all the world to my pipe.

AIR XLIII. *Freemason's Tune.*

Let the learned talk of books,
The glutton of cooks,
The lover of Celia's soft smack-o;
No mortal can boast
So noble a toast,
As a pipe of accepted tobacco.

Let the soldier for fame,
And a general's name,
In battle get many a thwack-o;
Let who will have most,
Who will rule the roast,
Give me but a pipe of tobacco.

Tobacco gives wit
To the dullest old cit,
And makes him of politics crack-o;
The lawyers i' th' hall
Were not able to bawl,
Were it not for a whiff of tobacco.

The man whose chief glory
Is telling a story,
Had never arrived at the knack-o,
Between every heying,
And as I was saying,
Did he not take a whiff of tobacco.

The doctor who places
Much skill in grimaces,
And feels your pulse running tick-tack-o;
Would you know his chief skill?
It is only to fill,
And smoke a good pipe of tobacco.

The courtiers alone
To this weed are not prone;
Would you know what 'tis makes them so slack-o!
'Twas because it inclined
To be honest the mind,
And therefore they banished tobacco.

SCENE II.

SIR OWEN *and* LADY APSHINKEN.

LADY APSHINKEN. It is very hard, my dear, that I must be an eternal slave to my family; that the moment my back is turned every thing goes to rack and manger; that you will take no care upon yourself, like a sleepy good-for-nothing drone as you are.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. My wife is a very good wife, only a little inclined to talking. If she had no tongue, or I had no ears, we should be the happiest couple in Wales.

LADY APSHINKEN. Sir Owen! Sir Owen! it is very well known what offers I refused when I married you.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. Yes, my dear, it is very well known, indeed—I have heard of it often enough in conscience.—But of this I am confident—if you had ever had a better offer, you knew your own interest too well to have refused it.

LADY APSHINKEN. Ungrateful man!—If I have shown that I know the value of money, it has been for your interest as well as mine; and let me tell you, sir, whenever my conscience hath struggled with my interest, she hath always got the better.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. Why possibly it may be so—for I am sure whichever side your tongue is of, will get the better.—And harkye, my dear, I fancy your conscience and your tongue lie very near together.—As for your interest, it lies too near your heart to have any intercourse with your tongue.

LADY APSHINKEN. Methinks, Sir Owen, you should be the last who reflected on me for scolding your servants.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. So I would, if you would not scold at me.—Vent your ill-nature on all the parish, let me and my tobacco alone, and I care not; but a scolding wife to me is a walking bass-viol out of tune.

LADY APSHINKEN. Sir, sir, a drunken husband is a bad fiddle-stick to that bass-viol, never able to put her into tune, nor to play any tune upon her.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. A scolding wife is rosin to that fiddle-stick, continually rubbing it up to play, till it wear out.

AIR XLIV. *Tenant of my own.*

Of all bad sorts of wives
The scolds are sure the worst,
With a hum drum, scum, hurry scurry scum,
Would I'd a cuckold been,
Ere I had been accurst
With your hum drum, &c.

Would he have curst mankind
(If Juno's drawn to life)
When Jupiter Pandora sent,
He should have sent his wife,
With her hum drum, &c.

SCENE III.

LADY APSHINKEN *and* SUSAN.

LADY APSHINKEN. Go thy ways, for an errant knight as thou art.—So, Susan, what bring you?

SUSAN. The bill of fare, madam.

LADY APSHINKEN. The bill of fare! this looks more like a bill for a month than a day.

SUSAN. Master hath invited several of the tenants to-day, madam.

LADY APSHINKEN. Yes, I am acquainted with your master's generosity—he would keep a tenant's table by his consent.—On my conscience, he would suffer some of the poorer tenants to eat more than their rent out.

SUSAN. Heaven bless him for such goodness!

LADY APSHINKEN. This sirloin of beef may stand, only cut off half of it for to-morrow——it is too big for one dish.

SUSAN. O dear madam! it is a thousand pities to cut it.

LADY APSHINKEN. Pshaw! I tell you no polite people suffer a large dish to come to their table.—I have seen an entertainment of three courses, where the substance of the whole would not have made half a sirloin of beef.

SUSAN. The devil take such politeness, I say.

LADY APSHINKEN. A goose roasted—very well; take particular care of the giblets, they bear a very good price in the market. Two brace of partridges—I'll leave out one of them. An apple-pie with quinces—why quinces, when you know quinces are so dear?—There; and for the rest, do you keep it, and let me have two dishes a day, till it is out.

SUSAN. Why, madam, half the provision will stink at that rate.

LADY APSHINKEN. Then they will eat the less of it.—I know some good housewives that never buy any other, for it is always cheap, and will go the farther.

SUSAN. So, as the smell of the old English hospitality used to invite people in, that of the present is to keep them away.

LADY APSHINKEN. Old English hospitality! Oh, don't name it, I am sick at the sound.

SUSAN. Would I had lived in those days!—I wish I had been born a cook in an age when there was some business for one! before we had learnt this French politeness, and been taught to dress our meat by nations that have no meat to dress.

AIR XLV. *The King's old Courtier.*

When mighty roast beef was the Englishman's food,
It ennobled our hearts and enriched our blood,
Our soldiers were brave and our courtiers were good.
Oh the roast beef of England,
And old England's roast beef!

But since we have learnt from all-conquering France,
To eat their ragouts as well as to dance,
Oh what a fine figure we make in romance!
Oh the roast beef of England,
And old England's roast beef!

LADY APSHINKEN. Servants are continually jealous of the least thrift of a master or mistress; they are never easy but when they observe extravagance.

SCENE IV.

LADY APSHINKEN *and* PUZZLETEXT.

AIR XLVI. *Oh Jenny, oh Jenny.*

LADY AP. Oh doctor, oh doctor, where hast thou been?
Sure woman was never like me perplext!
I have been chiding:
PUZ. I have been riding,
And meditating upon my text.

LADY APSHINKEN. I wish you would give us a sermon on charity, that my servants might know that it is no charity to indulge a voluptuous appetite.

PUZZLETEXT. There is, madam, as your ladyship very well knows, a religious charity, and an irreligious charity.—— Now the religious charity teaches us rather to starve the belly of our friend, than feed it. Verily, starving is voluptuous food for a sinful constitution.

LADY APSHINKEN. I wish, doctor, when you go next to London, you would buy me up, at the cheapest rates, all the books upon charity that have been published.

PUZZLETEXT. I have a treatise, madam, which I shall shortly publish, that will comprehend the whole. It will be writ in Latin, and dedicated to your ladyship.

LADY APSHINKEN. Any thing for the encouragement of religion.——I am a great admirer of the Latin language.— I believe, doctor, I now understand Latin as well as English. —But oh, doctor! it gives me pain, very great pain, that notwithstanding all our endeavours, there should yet remain so many wicked people in our parish.——One of the tenants, the other day, abused his wife in the most terrible manner. Shall I never make them use their wives tolerably?

AIR XLVII.

LADY AP. Ah, doctor! I long, much as misers for pelf,
To see the whole parish as good as myself.
PUZ. Ah, madam! your ladyship need not to doubt,
But that by my sermons will be soon brought about.
LADY AP. Ah, man! can your sermons put them in the right way,
When not one in ten e'er hears what you say?
PUZ. Ah, madam! your ladyship need not to fear,
If you make them pay, but I'll make them hear.

SCENE V.

To them, ROBIN.

AIR XLVIII. *In Porus.*

ROBIN. Some confounded planet reigning,
Surely hath, beyond explaining,
Your sex beguiled,
Sense defiled,
Sense awry led
To mistake:
I should wonder,
Could you blunder
Thus awake.
But if your almighty wit
Me for William will quit,
E'en brew as you bake.

LADY APSHINKEN. What's the meaning of this?
ROBIN. Is your ladyship a stranger to it then?—Madam,

don't you know that I am to be turned away, and William made butler?

LADY APSHINKEN. How!

ROBIN. Nay, I assure your ladyship it is true. I just now received a message from master, to give an account of the plate—and perhaps I shall give a better account than William would, had he been butler as long as I have.

LADY APSHINKEN. I am out of all patience; I'll to Sir Owen this moment—I will see whether I am a cipher in this house or no.

PUZZLETEXT. Harkye, Mr. Robin, you are safe enough—her ladyship is your friend.—So go you and send me a bottle of good wine into my room, for I am a very good friend of yours.

SCENE VI.

ROBIN. [*Solus.*] It is not that I intend to live long in the family—but I don't care to be turned away.—I would give warning myself, and if this storm blows over, I will.—Thanks to my industry, I have made a shift to get together a little comfortable subsistence for the rest of my days.—I'll purchase some little snug farm in Wales of about a hundred a year, and retire with—ah!—with whom shall I retire, since Sweetissa's false?—What avails it to me that I can purchase an estate, when I cannot purchase happiness?

AIR XLIX. *Cupid, God of pleasing anguish.*

What avail large sums of treasure,
But to purchase sums of pleasure,
    But your wishes to obtain?
Poor the wretch whole worlds possessing,
While his dearest darling blessing
    He must sigh for still in vain.

SCENE VII.

ROBIN *and* SWEETISSA.

ROBIN. Where is my wealth, when the cabinet it was locked up in is broke open and plundered?

SWEETISSA. He's here!—love would blow me like a whirlwind to his arms, did not the string of honour pull me back—Honour, that forces more lies from the mouth of a woman than gold does from the mouth of a lawyer.

ROBIN. See where she stands! the false, the perjured she.—Yet, guilty as she is, she would be dearer to my soul than light—did not my honour interpose—My honour, which cannot suffer me to wed a whore. I must part with honour, or with her—and a servant without honour is a wretch indeed!—How happy are men of quality, who cannot lose their honour, do what they will?—Right honour is tried in roguery, as gold is in the fire, and comes out still the same.

AIR L. *Dame of honour.*

Nice honour by a private man
  With zeal must be maintained!
For soon 'tis lost, and never can
  By any be regained.
But once right honourable grown,
  He's then its rightful owner;
For though the worst of rogues he's known,
  He's still a man of honour.

SWEETISSA. I wish I could impute this blindness of yours to love. But, alas! love would see me, not my faults.—— You see my faults, not me.

ROBIN. I wish it were possible to see you faultless—but

alas! you are so hemmed in with faults, one must see through them to come at you.

SWEETISSA. I know of none, but loving you too well.

ROBIN. That may be one, perhaps, if you were great with William.

SWEETISSA. Oh Robin! if thou art resolved to be false, do not, I beseech thee, do not let thy malice conspire to ruin my reputation.

ROBIN. There, madam, read that letter once more, then bid me be tender of your reputation, if you can—though women have always the boldest claims to reputation when they have the least pretensions to it; for virtue, like gunpowder, never makes any noise till it goes off—when you hear the report, you may be sure it's gone.

SWEETISSA. This is some conspiracy against me; for may the devil fetch me this instant, if ever I saw this letter before.

ROBIN. What! and drop it from your pocket?

SWEETISSA. Oh base man!—If ever I suffered William to kiss me in my life, unless when we have been at questions and commands, may I never—be kissed while I live again.—And if I am not a maid now—may I die as good a maid as I am now.—But you shall see that I am not the only one who can receive letters and drop them from their pockets too.——There, if thou art guilty, that letter will shock thee —while innocence guards me.

AIR LI. *Why will Florella.*

When guilt within the bosom lies,
A thousand ways it speaks.
It stares affrighted through the eyes
And blushes through the cheeks.

But innocence, disdaining fear,
Adorns the injured face,
And, while the black accuser's near,
Shines forth with brighter grace.

ROBIN. Surprising!—sure some little writing devil lurks in the house. Ha! a thought hath just shot through my brain. Sweetissa, if you have virtue—if you have honour—if you have humanity, answer me one question. Did the parson ever make love to you?

SWEETISSA. Why do you ask me that?

ROBIN. These two letters are writ by the same hand; and if they were not writ by William, they must have been by the parson—for no one else, I believe, can write or read in the house.

SWEETISSA. I can't say he hath, nor I can't say he hath not. Once he told me that if I was worth a hundred pounds he'd marry me.

ROBIN. Did he? that's enough; by George I'll make an example of him—I'll beat him till he hath as great an aversion to marriage as any priest in Rome hath.

SWEETISSA. O fie! what, beat the parson?

ROBIN. Never tell me of the parson—if he will have my meat, I'll give him some sauce to it.

SWEETISSA. Consider, good Robin; for though thou hast been a base man to me, I would not have thee damned.

ROBIN. The parson would send me to heaven, I thank him.—I'd rather be damned than go to heaven as the parson's cuckold. Sbud! I'll souse him till he shall have as little appetite for woman's flesh as horse flesh.

AIR LII. *Hunt the squirrel.*

SWEET. Oh, for goodness sake forebear!
Think he's a parson, think he's a parson;
Look upon the cloth he wears,
Ere you pull his ears.

ROBIN. Cease your chattering, I will batter him;
Blood and thunder-bolt!
I'll rub him, drub him, scrub him down,
As jockeys do a colt.

SWEETISSA. He's gone; perhaps will knock the parson on the head. What can he then expect to be but hanged by the neck? Oh! that he were hanged once safe about my neck. Ye powers preserve him from the hangman's noose, and tie him fast in Hymen's.

SCENE VIII.

SWEETISSA *and* JOHN.

SWEETISSA. Oh, John! fly! if thou wilt save thy friend—fly up into the parson's closet.

JOHN. What's the matter?

SWEETISSA. One moment's delay, and Robin's lost.—He is gone in a mighty passion to beat the parson; run and prevent him, for if he should kill the parson, he will be hanged.

JOHN. Kill him! If he lifts up his hand against him, he will be put in the spiritual court, and that's worse than hanging.

SWEETISSA. Fly, fly, dear John.—What torments attend a mind in love.

AIR LIII. *The play of love.*

What vast delights must virgins prove,
Who taste the dear excess of love!
Since, while so many ways undone,
And all our joys must fly from one,
Eager to love's embrace we run.

So when in some small island lies
The eager merchant's brilliant prize,
That dear, that darling spot to gain,
He views black tempests with disdain,
And all the dangers of the main.

SCENE IX.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* SWEETISSA.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Sweetissa in tears!—so looks the lily after a shower, while drops of rain run gently down its silken leaves, and gather sweetness as they pass.

AIR LIV. *Si cari.*

Smile, smile, Sweetissa smile;
Repining banish,
Let sorrow vanish,
Grief does the complexion spoil.
Smile, smile, Sweetissa, smile;
Lift up your charming, cha—a—arming,
Charming, charming eyes,
As the sun's brightest rays in summer skies.

What is the matter, my dear Sweetissa.

SWEETISSA. Whatever be the matter—it is no matter of yours, Master Owen.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. I would hug thee in my arms and comfort thee—if thou wouldst let me. Give me a buss—do.

AIR LV. *Sleep body.*

SWEETISSA. Little master,
Pretty master,
Your pursuit give over;
Surely nature
Such a creature
Never meant for a lover.

A beau, and baboon,
In a dull afternoon,
May ladies divert by their capers;
But weak is her head
Who takes to her bed
Such a remedy for the vapours.
Little master, &c.

SCENE X.

AIR LVI.

OWEN. [*Solus.*] Go, and like a slub'ring Bess howl,
Whilst at your griefs I'm quaffing,
For the more you cry, the less you'll—
Tol, lol, de rol.
Be inclined to laughing.

SCENE XI.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* SUSAN.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. So, Mrs. Susan, which way are you going?

SUSAN. Going!—why, I am going to find madam out—if she will have no victuals, she shall have no cook for Susan. If I cut the sirloin of beef, may the devil cut me.

AIR LVII. *South-sea Tune.*

An Irishman loves potatoes;
A Frenchman chews
Salads and ragouts;
A Dutchman, waterzuche;
The Italian, macaroons;

The Scotchman loves sheep's heads, sir;
The Welsh with cheese are fed, sir;
An Englishman's chief
Delight is roast beef;
And if I divide the ox' sirloin
May the devil cut off mine.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Oh! do not spoil thy pretty face with passion. Give me a kiss, my dear pretty little cook.

SUSAN. Give you a kiss!—give you a slap in the face, or a rod for your backside. When I am kissed, it shall be by another guise sort of spark than you. Sbud! your head looks like the scrag end of a neck of mutton just floured for basting. A kiss!—a fart!

SCENE XII.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* MARGERY.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Go thy ways, greasy face. Oh, here's my little Margery now.

MARGERY. Not so little neither, Master Owen. I am big enough for you still.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. And so thou art, my dear, and my dove—Come, let us—let us—let us—

MARGERY. Let us what?

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Let us, I'gad, I don't know what—Let us kiss like any thing.

MARGERY. Not so fast, squire—your mamma must give you a larger allowance before it comes to that between you and me. Look'ee, sir, when you can produce that fine apron you promised me, I don't know what my gratitude may bring me to. But I am resolved, if ever I do play the fool, I'll have something to show for it, besides a great belly.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Pox on 'em all!—I shall

not compass one out of the whole family.—I'gad, I'll e'en go back to Molly, and make sure of her, if possible—or I may be in danger of dying half a maid yet; for the devil take me, if I ha'n't a shrewd suspicion that, in all my amours, I never yet thoroughly knew what a fine woman was. I fancy it often happens so among us fine gentlemen.

AIR LVIII.

The idle beau of pleasure
Oft boasts a false amour,
As breaking cit his treasure,
Most gaudy, when most poor;
But the rich miser hides the stores he does amass,
And the true lover still conceals his happy lass.

SCENE XIII.

PUZZLETEXT, ROBIN, *and* JOHN.

PUZZLETEXT. I will have satisfaction.—Speak not to me, Master John, of any thing but satisfaction.—I will box him.——I will show him that I was not bred at Oxford for nothing.——Splutter! I will show him my head is good for something else besides preaching. [*Butts at him.*

ROBIN. You would have armed my head better for butting, I thank you.

PUZZLETEXT. You are a lying rascal, and a liar in your teeth.

ROBIN. You are a liar in your tongue, doctor, and that's worse.

PUZZLETEXT. The lie to me, sirrah! I will cut your brains out, if you have any brains. Let me go, John—let me go.

ROBIN. Let him come: I warrant he goes back again faster than he came.

PUZZLETEXT. Sbud! sbud! sbud!

JOHN. Fie, doctor! be not in such a passion; consider who you are—you must forgive.

PUZZLETEXT. I will not forgive.——Forgiveness is sometimes a sin, ay, and a damned sin.—No, I will not forgive him.—Sirrah, I will make such an example of you, as shall deter all such vagabonds for the future how they affront the Church.

AIR LIX. *Buff-coat.*

In spiritual court
I'll show you such a sport,
Shall make you your own folly curse, sir.
ROB. But you shall be bit,
For I'll stand in the sheet,
And keep you from handling my purse, sir.
PUZ. In this you'll be shamed,
In the other world damned,
Here a priest, there a devil you'll find, sir.
ROB. I shall know then if priest
Or devil be best
At the art of tormenting mankind, sir.
PUZ. Let me go, John—I will—splutter!

SCENE XIV.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN, LADY APSHINKEN, PUZZLETEXT, ROBIN, WILLIAM, JOHN, SUSAN, SWEETISSA, MARGERY.

LADY APSHINKEN. Heyday! what's the meaning of this? Mr. Puzzletext, you are not mad I hope?

PUZZLETEXT. Splutter! my lady, but I am. I have been abused—I have been beaten.

LADY APSHINKEN. It cannot be by Robin, I am sure; he's peaceably enough inclined.

WILLIAM. He'll not strike a blow, unless he's forced to it, I warrant him.

PUZZLETEXT. Yes, it is by Robin; he hath abused me for writing to his mistress, when I have not had a pen in my hand, save for half a sermon, these six months.

WILLIAM. Sure letters run strangely in his head!—he hath quarrelled with me once to-day, and now he hath quarrelled with Mr. Puzzletext, for writing to his mistress ——He knows his own demerits, and therefore is jealous of every man he sees for a rival.

ROBIN. I have not so bad an opinion of myself as to be jealous of you, however sensible you may be of your own merits.

LADY APSHINKEN. Let us have no quarrelling here, pray. —I thought you had more sense than to quarrel with the Church. [*Aside to* Robin.

WILLIAM. Master may keep you, if he pleases——when he knows you are a rogue; but I'll swear to your stealing the two silver spoons.

SWEETISSA. You have reason to talk, good Mr. William ——I'll swear to your having robbed one of the coaches of the curtains to make yourself a waistcoat; and your having stolen a pair of buckles out of the harness, and sold them to Mr. Owen, to wear them in his shoes.

SUSAN. If you come to that, madam, who stole a short silk apron from my lady, and a new flannel petticoat, which you have on at this moment?

JOHN. Not so fast, good Susan saucebox—Who basted away dozens of butter more than she need, that she may sell the grease?——Who brings in false bills of fare, and puts the forged articles in her own pocket?—Who wants wine and brandy for sauces and sweetmeats, and drinks it herself?

WILLIAM. And who wants strong beer for his horses, which he drinks himself?

MARGERY. I think you should forget that, lest you should be put in mind of the same practice with the coach-horses.

SUSAN. I suppose when you remember that, you don't

forget taking a dram from her ladyship's bottle every time you make the bed.

LADY APSHINKEN. I can excuse you there, Margery, for I keep all my bottles under lock and key.

SUSAN. But I suppose your ladyship will not excuse her from a false key, the which I will take my oath she hath now in her pocket.

LADY APSHINKEN. Very fine, indeed!

PUZZLETEXT. Verily, I am concerned to find my sermons have had no better effect on you. I think it is a difficult matter to determine which deserves to be hanged most; and if Robin, the butler, hath cheated more than other people, I see no other reason for it, but because he hath had more opportunity to cheat.

ROBIN. Well said, parson!—once in thy life thou hast spoken truth.

WILLIAM. We are none of us so bad as Robin, though—there's cheating in his very name.—Robin, is as much as to say, robbing.

PUZZLETEXT. That is none of the best puns, Master Will.

ROBIN. Well said, parson, again!

AIR LX. *Ye madcaps of England.*

In this little family plainly we find
A little epitome of human kind,
Where down from the beggar, up to the great man,
Each gentleman cheats you no more than he can.
Sing tantarara, rogues all.
For if you will be such a husband of pelf,
To be served by no cheats you must e'en serve yourself;
The world is so cramm'd brimful of deceit,
That if Robin be a name for a cheat,
Sing tantarara, Bobs all, Bobs all,
Sing tantarara, Bobs all.

LADY APSHINKEN. And have I been raking, and rending, and scraping, and scratching, and sweating, to be plundered by my servants?

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. Why, truly, my dear, if you had any family to provide for, you would have had some excuse for your saving, to save fortunes for your younger children.—But as we have but one son to provide for, and he not much worth providing for, e'en let the servants keep what they have stole, and much good may it do them.

LADY APSHINKEN. This is such notorious extravagance!

OMNES. Heavens bless your good honour.

AIR LXI. *My name is old Hewson.*

ROBIN. I once as your butler did cheat you,
For myself I will set up now;
If you come to my house I will treat you
With a pig of your own sow.

SWEETISSA. I once did your ladyship chouse,
And rob you of trinkets good store;
But when I am gone from your house,
I promise to cheat you no more.

WILLIAM. Your lining I own, like a blockhead,
I stole, to my utter reproach;
But you will be money in pocket,
If you will sell off your horses and coach.

SUSAN. My rogueries are all confest,
And for a new maid you may look;
For where there's no meat to be drest,
There is little need of a cook.

CHORUS. And so we all give you warning,
And give you a month's wages too;
We all go off to-morrow morning,
And may better servants ensue.

SCENE XV.

To them, MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* MOLLY.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* MOLLY. Your blessing, sir.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN *and* LADY APSHINKEN. How!

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN *and* MOLLY. We are your son and daughter.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. My son married to the daughter of a tenant!

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Oh, sir! she is your tenant's daughter, but worthy of a crown.

AIR LXII. *Fond Echo.*

MOLLY. Oh, think not the maid whom you scorn,
With riches delighted can be!
Had I a great Princess been born
My Owen had dear been to me!
On others your treasures bestow,
Give Owen alone to these arms;
In grandeur and wealth we find woe,
But in love there is nothing but charms.

OWEN. In title and wealth what is lost,
In tenderness oft is repaid;
Too much a great fortune may cost,
Well purchased may be the poor maid.
While fancy's faint dreams cheat the great,
We pleasure will equally prove;
While they in their palaces hate,
We in our poor cottage may love.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. She sings delightfully, that's the truth on't.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. T'other song,—t'other song —ply him with songs till he forgives us.

AIR LXIII. *Lass of Patie's Mill.*

MOLLY. If I too high aspire,
'Tis Love that plumes my wings,
Love makes a clown a squire,
Would make a squire a king.
What maid that Owen spies,
From Love can e'er be free?
Love in his laced coat lies,
And peeps from his toupee.

SIR OWEN APSHINKEN. I can hold out no longer.

LADY APSHINKEN. Nor I: let me see you embrace one another, and then I'll embrace you both.

AIR LXIV. *Caro vien.*

MOLLY. With joy my heart 's o'erflowing:
OWEN. With joy my heart's jolly.
MOLLY. Oh, my dearest sweet Owen!
OWEN. O, my charming Molly!

Since I am happy myself, I will make others so.—These letters, Robin, which caused all the jealousy between you and Sweetissa, I wrote out of a frolic.

ROBIN. Ha! and did I suspect Sweetissa falsely?

SWEETISSA. And did I suspect my Robin?

ROBIN. Oh, my Sweetissa! my sweet.

SWEETISSA. Oh, my Robin! my Bob.

ROBIN. This hour shall make us one.——Doctor, lead to church.

WILLIAM. What sayst thou, Susan? Shall we follow our leaders?

SUSAN. Why, faith, I am generally frank, you know, and speak my mind.—I say, yes.

JOHN. And thou, Margery?

MARGERY. I do not say no.

PUZZLETEXT. I am ready to do your business whenever you please.

MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. Lookye, as I have married first, I desire my wedding may be celebrated first, at least with one dance; for which I have prepared the fiddles.

PUZZLETEXT. And for which I have prepared my fiddle too; for I am always in utrumque paratus.

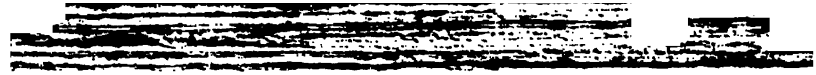
MASTER OWEN APSHINKEN. This shall be a day of hospitality, I am resolved.

LADY APSHINKEN. And I am resolved not to see it; and would advise you not to be extravagant in it.

A dance here.

AIR LXV. *Little Jack Horner.*

PUZZLETEXT. Couples united,
Ever delighted,
May they ne'er disagree!
WOMEN. First we will wed,
MEN. Then we'll to bed;
OMNES. What happy rogues are we!
CHORUS. Couples united,
Ever delighted,
May we ne'er disagree!
First we will wed,
Then we'll to bed;
What happy rogues are we.



THE

Old DEBAUCHEES.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE.

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

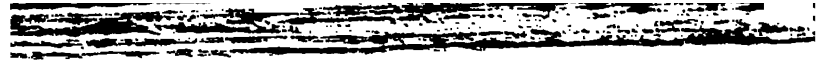
By the Author of the MODERN HUSBAND.



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[Price One Shilling.]



PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. MILLS

I WISH with all my heart, the stage and town
Would both agree to cry all prologues down;
That we, no more obliged to say or sing,
Might drop this useless necessary thing:
No more with awkward strut, before the curtain,
Chant out some rhymes—there's neither good nor hurt
What is this stuff the poets make us deal in,
But some old worn-out jokes of their retailing:
From sages of our own, or former times,
Transversed from prose, perhaps transposed from rhymes.
How long the tragic muse her station kept,
How guilt was humbled, and how tyrants wept,
Forgetting still how often hearers slept.
Perhaps, for change, you, now and then, by fits,
Are told that critics are the bane of wits,
How they turn vampires, being dead and damned,
And with the blood of living bards are crammed:
That poets thus tormented die, and then
The devil gets in them, and they suck again.
Thus modern bards, like Bayes, their prologues frame
For this, and that, and every play the same,
Which you, most justly, neither praise nor blame.
As something must be spoke, no matter what;
No friends are now by prologues lost or got;
By such harangues we raise nor spleen, nor pity—
Thus ends this idle, but important ditty.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MEN

OLD LABOON	*Mr. Yates.*
YOUNG LABOON	*Mr. Moxeen.*
FATHER MARTIN	*Mr. Taswell.*
OLD JOURDAIN	*Mr. Neale.*

WOMEN

ISABEL	*Mrs. Ridout.*
BEATRICE	*Miss Royer.*

SCENE.—TOULON.

N. B.—Those lines in inverted commas are left out in the acting.

THE DEBAUCHEES;

OR,

THE JESUIT CAUGHT

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Mr. Jourdain's.

Isabel, Beatrice.

Isabel. A nunnery! Ha, ha, ha! and is it possible, my dear Beatrice, you can intend to sacrifice your youth and beauty, to go out of the world as soon as you come into it?

Beatrice. No one, my dear Isabel, can sacrifice too much, or too soon, to Heaven!

Isabel. Pshaw! Heaven regards hearts and not faces, and an old woman will be as acceptable a sacrifice as a young one.

Beatrice. It is possible you may come to a better understanding, and value the world as little as I do.

"Isabel. As you say, it is possible when I can enjoy it no longer, I may; nay, I do not care if I promise you, when I grow old and ugly, I'll come and keep you company; but this I am positive, till the world is weary of me, I never shall be weary of the world."

Beatrice. What can a woman of sense see in this world worth her valuing?

Isabel. Oh! ten thousand pretty things! Equipage, cards, music, plays, balls, flattery, visits, and that prettiest



...llow.—"I rather wonder ...rit can fancy in a nunnery, ... and sometimes, I am afraid, ... than that of an old fusty friar." ... state, when every man one sees, ... to sins, is to rebuke us for them! ... sentiments as these would indeed make ... but believe me, child, you would soon ... mankind; fasting and praying are the ... world for these violent passions. ... On my conscience I should want neither; if the ... sight of a set of dirty priests would not bring me ... mankind, I dare swear nothing could."

SCENE II.

OLD LAROON, ISABEL, BEATRICE.

OLD LAROON. Good morrow, my little wagtail——my grasshopper, my butterfly. Odso! you little baggage, you look as full of——as full of love, and sport, and wantonness ——I wish I was a young fellow again——Oh! that I was but five-and-twenty for thy sake. Where's my boy? What, has not he been with you, has not he serenaded you?—Ods-heart, I never let his mother sleep for a month before I married her.

ISABEL. Indeed!

OLD LAROON. No, madam, nor for a month afterwards neither. The young fellows of this age are nothing, mere butterflies, to those of ours.——Ods-heart, I remember the time when I could have taken a hop, step, and jump over the steeple of Notre Dame.

BEATRICE. I fancy the sparks of your age had wings, sir.

OLD LAROON. Wings, you little baggage, no——but they had—they had limbs like elephants, and as strong they were as Samson, and as swift as—Why, I have myself, run down a stag in a fair chase, and ate him afterwards for my dinner.

But come, where is my old neighbour, my old friend, my old Jourdain?

ISABEL. At his devotions, I suppose; this is the hour he generally employs in them.

OLD LAROON. This hour! ay, all hours. I dare swear he spends more time in them than all the priests in Toulon. Well, give him his due, he was wicked as long as he could be so; and when he could sin no longer, why he began to repent that he had sinned at all. Oh! there is nothing so devout as an old whoremaster.

BEATRICE. I fancy then it will be shortly time for you to think of it, sir!

OLD LAROON. Ay, madam, about some thirty or forty years hence it may——Ods-heart! I am but in the prime of my years yet: "And if it was not for a saucy young rascal, who looks me in the face and calls me father, might make a very good figure among the beaus. But though I am not so young in years, I am in constitution, as any of them;" and I don't question but to live to see a son and a great-grandson both born on the same day.

ISABEL. You will excuse this lady, Mr. Laroon, who is going to retire so much earlier——

OLD LAROON. Retire!——Then it is with a young fellow, I hope.

ISABEL. Into a cloister, I assure you.

OLD LAROON. A cloister!—Why, madam, if you have a mind to hang yourself at the year's end, would it not be better to spend your time in matrimony than in a nunnery? Don't let a set of rascally priests put strange notions in your head. Take my word for it, and I am a very honest fellow, there are no raptures worth a louse, but those in the arms of a brisk young cavalier. Of all the actions of my youth, there are none I reflect on with so much pleasure as having burnt half a dozen nunneries, and delivered several hundred virgins out of captivity.

BEATRICE. Oh! villany! unheard-of villany!

ISABEL. Unheard of till this moment, I dare swear.

OLD LAROON. Out of which number there are at present

nine countesses, three duchesses, and a queen, who owe their liberty and their promotion to this arm.

SCENE III.

OLD LAROON, YOUNG LAROON, ISABEL, BEATRICE.

OLD LAROON. You are a fine spark, truly, to let your father visit your mistress before you—'Sdeath! I believe you are no son of mine. Where have you been sir? What have you been doing, sir, hey?

YOUNG LAROON. Sir, I have been at my devotions.

OLD LAROON. At your devotions! nay, then you are no son of mine, that's certain. Is not this the shrine you are to offer up at, sirrah? Is not here the altar you are to officiate at?—Sirrah! you have no blood of mine in you. I believe you are the bastard of some travelling English alderman, and must have come into the world with a custard in your mouth.

YOUNG LAROON. I hope, madam, you will allow my excuse, though the old gentleman here will not.

OLD LAROON. Old gentleman! very fine! Sirrah! I'll convince you I am a young gentleman; I'll marry to night, and make you a brother before you are a father; I'll teach you to thrust him out of the world that thrust you into it.—Madam, have no more to say to the ungracious dog.

YOUNG LAROON. That will be a sure way to quit all obligations between us; for the happiness I propose in this lady is the chief reason why I should thank you for bringing me into the world.

OLD LAROON. What's that you say, sir? Say that again, sir.

YOUNG LAROON. I was only thanking you, sir, for desiring this lady to take from me all I esteem on earth.

OLD LAROON. Well enough that! I begin to think him my own again. I have made that very speech to half the women in Paris.

SCENE IV.

To them, FATHER MARTIN.

FATHER MARTIN. Peace be with you all, good people.

OLD LAROON. Peace cannot stay long in any place where a priest comes. [*Aside.*

FATHER MARTIN. Daughter, I am ready to receive your confession——

OLD LAROON. Ay, ay, she has a fine parcel of sinful thoughts to answer for, I warrant her.

FATHER MARTIN. Mr. Laroon, you are too much inclined to slander, I must reprove you for it. My daughter's thoughts are as pure as a saint's.

OLD LAROON. As any saint's in Christendom within a day of matrimony.

FATHER MARTIN. Within a day of matrimony! it is too quick, I have not yet had sufficient time to prepare her mind for that solemn sacrament.

OLD LAROON. Prepare her mind for a young fellow; prepare your mind for a bishopric.

FATHER MARTIN. Sir, there are ceremonies requisite; I shall be as expeditious as possible, but the Church has rules.

OLD LAROON. Sir, you may be as expeditious or as slow as you please, but I will not have my boy disappointed of his happiness, one day, for all the rules in Europe.

SCENE V.

FATHER MARTIN, ISABEL.

FATHER MARTIN. I shall bring this haughtiness to a penance you may not like. Well, my dear daughter. I hope your account is not long. You have not many articles since our last reckoning.

ISABEL. I wish you do not think so, father. First, telling

nine lies at the opera the other night to Mr. Laroon; yesterday talked during the whole mass to a young cavalier. [*He groans.*] Nay, if you groan already, I shall make you groan more before I have done; last night cheated at cards, scandalised three of my acquaintance, went to bed without saying my prayers, and dreamt of Mr. Laroon.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh!——Tell me the particulars of that dream.

ISABEL. Nay, father, that I must be excused.

FATHER MARTIN. Modesty at confession is as unseasonable as in bed; and your mind should appear as naked to your confessor, as your person to your husband.

ISABEL. I thought he embraced me with the utmost tenderness.

FATHER MARTIN. But were you pleased therewith?

ISABEL. You know, father, a lie now would be the greatest of sins. I was not displeased, I assure you. But I have often heard you say, there is no sin in love.

FATHER MARTIN. No, in love itself there is not: love is not *malum in se.* Nor in the excess is there sometimes any; but then it must be rightly placed, must be directed to a proper object. The love a daughter bears her confessor is no doubt not only innocent, but extremely laudable.

ISABEL. Yes, but that—that is another sort of love, you know.

FATHER MARTIN. You are deceived; there is but one sort of love which is justifiable, or, indeed, desirable.

ISABEL. I hope my love for Laroon is that.

FATHER MARTIN. That I know not, I wish it may, however, I have some dispute as yet remaining with me concerning it; till that be satisfied, it will be improper for you "to proceed any farther in the affair." All the penance, therefore, I shall enjoin you on this confession, is to defer your marriage one week; by which time I shall have resolved within myself whether you shall marry him at all.

ISABEL. Not marry him at all? Sure, father, you are not in earnest?

FATHER MARTIN. I never jest on these occasions.

ISABEL. What reason can you have?

FATHER MARTIN. My reasons may not be so ripe for your ears at present. But, perhaps, better things are designed for you.

ISABEL. A fiddlestick! I tell you, father, better things cannot be designed for me. "I suppose you have found out some old fellow with twenty livres a year more in his power; but I can assure you, if I marry not Laroon, I'll not marry any.

"FATHER MARTIN. Perhaps you are not designed to marry any. Let me feel your pulse—Extremely feverish.

"ISABEL. You are enough to put any one in a fever. I was to have been married to-morrow to a pretty fellow, and now I must defer my marriage, till you have considered whether I shall marry at all or no.

"FATHER MARTIN. Have you any more sins to confess?

"ISABEL. Sins! You have put all my sins out of my head, I think."

FATHER MARTIN. Benedicite—[*crossing himself.*] Daughter, you shall see me soon again, for great things are in agitation: at present, I leave you to your prayers.

SCENE VI.

ISABEL. [*Alone.*] Sure never poor maid had more need of prayers: but you have left me no great stomach to them. Great things are in agitation! What can he mean? "It must be so—Some old liquorish rogue, with a title or a larger estate, hath a mind to supplant my dear Laroon."

SCENE VII.

YOUNG LAROON, ISABEL.

YOUNG LAROON. My Isabel, my sweet!—how painfully do I count each tedious hour, till I can call you mine!

ISABEL. Indeed, you are like to count many more tedious hours than you imagine.

YOUNG LAROON. Ha! What means my love?

ISABEL. I would not have your wishes too impatient, that's all; but if you will wait a week, you shall know whether I intend to marry you or not.

YOUNG LAROON. And is this possible? Can words like these fall from Isabel's sweet lips; can she be false, inconstant, perjured?

ISABEL. Oh, do not discharge such a volley of terrible names upon me before you are certain I deserve them; doubt only whether I can be obedient to my confessor, and guess the rest.

YOUNG LAROON. Can he have enjoined you to be perjured? by Heaven, it would be sinful to obey him.

ISABEL. Be satisfied, if I prevail with myself to obey him in this week's delay, I will carry my obedience no farther.

"YOUNG LAROON. Oh! to what happiness have those dear words restored me. I am again myself: for while the possession of thee is sure, though distant, there is in that dear hope more transport than any other actual enjoyment can afford.

"ISABEL. Well, adieu, and to cram you quite full with hope (since you like the food) I here promise you, that the commands of all the priests in France shall not force me to marry another." That is, sir, I will either marry you or die a maid; and I have no violent inclination to the latter, on the word of a virgin.

SCENE VIII.

YOUNG LAROON. [*Solus.*] Whether a violent hatred to my father, or an inordinate love for mischief, hath set the priest on this affair, I know not. Perhaps it is the former ——for the old gentleman hath the happiness of being universally hated by every priest in Toulon.——Let a man abuse a physician, he makes another physician his friend;

let him rail at a lawyer, another will plead his cause gratis; if he libel this courtier, that courtier receives him into his bosom: but let him once attack a hornet or a priest, the whole nest of hornets, and the whole regiment of blackguards, are sure to be upon him.

SCENE IX.

OLD LAROON, *laughing,* YOUNG LAROON

YOUNG LAROON. You are merry, sir.

OLD LAROON. Merry, sir! Ay, sir! I am merry, sir. Would you have your father sad, you rascal? Have you a mind to bury him in his youth?

YOUNG LAROON. Pardon me, sir, I rather wish to know the happy occasion of your mirth.

OLD LAROON. The occasion of my mirth, sir, is the saddest sight that ever mortal beheld.

YOUNG LAROON. A very odd occasion indeed.

OLD LAROON. Very odd truly. It is the sight of an old honest whoremaster in a fit of despair, and a damned rogue of a priest riding him to the devil.

YOUNG LAROON. Ay, sir; but I have seen a more melancholy sight.

OLD LAROON. Ha! what can that be?

YOUNG LAROON. A fine young lady in a fit of love, and a priest keeping her from her lover.

OLD LAROON. How?

YOUNG LAROON. The explanation of which is, that Father Martin hath put off our match for a week.

OLD LAROON. Put off your match with Isabel!

YOUNG LAROON. Even so, sir.

OLD LAROON. Well, I never made a hole in a gown yet, I never have tapped a priest: but if I don't let out some reverend blood before the sun sets, may I never see him rise again! I'll carbonado the villain; I'll make a ragout for the devil's supper of him.

YOUNG LAROON. Let me entreat you, sir, to do nothing rashly, as long as I am safe in the faith of my Isabel.

OLD LAROON. I tell you, sirrah, no man is safe in the faith of a mistress, no one is secure of a woman till he is in bed with her. "Had there been any security in the faith of a mistress, I had been at present married to half the duchesses in France." I no more rely on what a woman says out of a church, than on what a priest says in it.

"YOUNG LAROON. Pardon me, sir: but I should have very little appetite to marry the woman whom I had such an opinion of.

"OLD LAROON. You had an opinion of! What business have you to have an opinion? Is it not enough that I have an opinion of her, that is, of her fortune?—But I suppose you are one of those romantic, whining coxcombs, that are in love with the woman behind her back:" sirrah, I have had two women lawfully, and two thousand unlawfully, and never was in love in my life.

"YOUNG LAROON. Well, sir, then I am happy that we both agree in the same person; I like the woman, and you her fortune.

"OLD LAROON. Yes, you dog, and I'd have you secure her as soon as you can: for if a greater fortune should be found out in Toulon, I'd make you marry her."——So go find out your mistress, and stick close to her, and I'll go seek the priest, whom, if I can find, I will stick close to with a vengeance.

SCENE X.— *Another Apartment.*

OLD JOURDAIN, FATHER MARTIN.

OLD JOURDAIN. Alas! father, there is one sin sticks by me more than any I have confessed to you. It is so enormous a one, my shame hath prevented me discovering it—— I have often concealed my crimes from my confessor.

FATHER MARTIN. That is a damnable sin indeed. It

seemeth to argue a distrust of the Church, the greatest of all crimes; a sin I fear the Church cannot forgive.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! say not so, father!

FATHER MARTIN. I should have said, will not, or not without difficulty; for the Church can do all things.

OLD JOURDAIN. That is some comfort again.

FATHER MARTIN. I hope, however, though you have not confessed them, you have not forgotten them; for they must be confessed before they can be forgiven.

OLD JOURDAIN. I hope I shall recollect them, they are a black roll.——I remember I once was the occasion of ruining a woman's reputation by showing a letter from her.

FATHER MARTIN. If you had shown it to the priest, it had been no fault.

OLD JOURDAIN. Alas! sir, I wrote the letter to myself, and thus traduced the innocent. I afterwards commanded a company of grenadiers at the taking of a town, where I knocked a poor old gentleman on the head for the sake of his money, and ravished his daughter.

FATHER MARTIN. These are crying sins indeed.

OLD JOURDAIN. At the same time I robbed a Jesuit of two pistoles.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! damnable! Oh! execrable!

OLD JOURDAIN. "Good father, have patience: I once borrowed five hundred livres of an honest citizen in Paris, and repaid him by lying with his wife: and what sits nearest my heart, was forced to pay a young cavalier the same sum, by suffering him to lie with mine.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh!

OLD JOURDAIN. And yet what are these to what I have done since I commenced merchant? What have I not done to get a penny? I insured a ship for a great value, and then cast it away;" I broke when I was worth a hundred thousand livres, and went over to London. I settled there, renounced my religion, and was made a justice of peace.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! that seat of heresy and damnation! that whore of Babylon!

OLD JOURDAIN. With the whores of Babylon did I unite:

I protected them from justice: gaming-houses and bawdy-houses did I license, nay, and frequent too: I never punished any vice but poverty: for oh! I dread to name it, I once committed a priest to Newgate for picking pockets.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! monstrous! horrible! dreadful! I'll hear no more. Thou art damned without reprieve.

OLD JOURDAIN. Take, pity, father, take pity on a penitent.

FATHER MARTIN. Pity! the Church abhors it. 'Twere mercy to such a wretch to pray him into Purgatory.

OLD JOURDAIN. I'll give all my estates to the Church, I'll found monasteries, I'll build abbeys.

FATHER MARTIN. All will not do, ten thousand masses will not deliver you.

OLD JOURDAIN. Was ever such a miserable wretch?

FATHER MARTIN. Thou hast sins enough to damn thy whole family. Monstrous impiety! to lift up the hand of justice against the Church.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh, speak some comfort to me: will no penance expiate my crime?

FATHER MARTIN. It is too grievous for a single penance; go settle your estate on the Church, and send your daughter to a nunnery, her prayers will avail more than yours: Heaven hears the young and innocent with pleasure. I will, myself, say four masses a day for you; and all these, I hope, will purchase your forgiveness; at least your stay in Purgatory will be short.

OLD JOURDAIN. My daughter! she is to be married to-morrow, and I shall never prevail on her.

FATHER MARTIN. You must force her. Your all depends on it.

OLD JOURDAIN. But I have already sworn I will not force her.

FATHER MARTIN. The Church absolves you from that oath, and it were now impiety to keep it. Go, lose not a moment, see her entered with the utmost expedition; she may put it out of your power.

OLD JOURDAIN. What a poor miserable wretch am I!

SCENE XI.

FATHER MARTIN. [*Solus.*] Thou art a miserable wretch indeed! and it is on such miserable wretches depends our power: that superstition which tears thy bowels, feeds ours. This nunnery is a masterpiece; let me but once shut up my dear Isabel from every other man, and the warmth of her constitution may be my very powerful friend. How far am I got already from the very brink of despair by the despair of this old fool. Superstition, I adore thee,

> Thou handle to the cheated layman's mind,
> By which in fetters priestcraft leads mankind.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

OLD JOURDAIN, ISABEL.

OLD JOURDAIN. Have you no compassion for your father, for him who gave you being? Could you bear to hear me howl in Purgatory?

ISABEL. Lud! papa! Do you think your putting me into Purgatory in this world will save you from Purgatory in the next? "If you have any sins, you must repent of them yourself; for I give you my word, I have enough to do to repent of my own.

"OLD JOURDAIN. You will soon wipe off that score, and will be then in a place where you cannot contract a new one.

"ISABEL. Indeed, sir, to shut a woman out from sin is not so easy. But, dear sir, how can it enter into your head, that my penance can be acceptable for your sin?" Take my word, one week's fasting will be of more service to you than this long fast you would enjoin me.

OLD JOURDAIN. Alas! child, if fasting would do, I am sure I have not been wanting to my duty; I have fasted till I am almost worn away to nothing; I have almost fasted myself into Purgatory, while I was fasting myself out of it.

ISABEL. But whence comes all this apprehension of your danger?

OLD JOURDAIN. Whence should it come, but from the Church?

ISABEL. Oh! sir, I have thought of the most lucky thing. You know my cousin Beatrice is just going into a nunnery, and she will pray for you as much as you would have her.

OLD JOURDAIN. Trifle not with so serious a concern. No prayers but yours will ever do me good.

ISABEL. Then you shall have them anywhere but in a nunnery.

OLD JOURDAIN. They must be there too.

ISABEL. That will be impossible; for if I was there, instead of praying you out of Purgatory, my prayers would be all bent to pray myself out of the nunnery again.

SCENE II.

OLD LAROON, OLD JOURDAIN, ISABEL.

OLD LAROON. A dog, a villain, put off my son's match! Mr. Jourdain, your servant; will you suffer a rogue of a Jesuit to defer your daughter's marriage a whole week?

OLD JOURDAIN. I am sorry, Mr. Laroon, for the disappointment, but her marriage will be deferred longer than that.

OLD LAROON. How, sir?

OLD JOURDAIN. She is intended for another marriage, sir; a much better match.

OLD LAROON. A much better match!——

ISABEL. Yes, sir, I am to be sent to a nunnery, to pray my father out of Purgatory.

OLD LAROON. Oh! Ho!—We'll make that matter very easy: he shall have no fear of Purgatory; for I'll send him to the devil this moment. Come, sir, draw, draw——

OLD JOURDAIN. Draw what, sir?

OLD LAROON. Draw your sword, sir.

OLD JOURDAIN. Alas, sir, I have long since done with swords; I have broken my sword long since.

OLD LAROON. Then I shall break your head, you old rogue.

OLD JOURDAIN. Heyday——you are mad; what's the matter?

OLD LAROON. Oh! no matter, no matter; you have used me ill, and you are a son of a whore, that's all.

OLD JOURDAIN. I would not, Mr. Laroon, have my conscience accuse me of using you ill: I would not have preferred any earthly match to your son, but if Heaven requires her——

OLD LAROON. I shall run mad.

OLD JOURDAIN. I hope my daughter has grace enough to make an atonement for her father's sins.

OLD LAROON. And so you would atone for all your former rogueries by a greater, by perverting the design of nature! Was this girl intended for praying? Harkye, old gentleman, let the young couple together, and they'll sacrifice their first fruits to the Church.

OLD JOURDAIN. It is impossible.

OLD LAROON. Well, sir, then I shall attempt to persuade you no longer; so, sir, I desire you would fetch your sword.

SCENE III.

YOUNG LAROON *in a Friar's habit,* OLD LAROON, OLD JOURDAIN.

YOUNG LAROON. Let peace be in this house——Where is the sinner Jourdain?

OLD JOURDAIN. Here is the miserable wretch.

OLD LAROON. Death and the devil, another priest.

YOUNG LAROON. Then know I am thy friend, and am come to save thee from destruction.

OLD LAROON. That's likely enough.

YOUNG LAROON. St. Francis, the patron of our order, hath sent me on this journey, to caution thee, that thou may not suffer thy sinful daughter to profane the holy veil. Such was, it seems, thy purpose; but the perdition that would have attended it I dread to think on. Rejoice, therefore, and prostrate thyself at the shrine of a saint, who has not only sent thee this caution, but does himself intercede for all thy sins.

OLD LAROON. Agad! and St. Francis is a very honest fellow, and thou art the first priest that ever I liked in my whole life.

OLD JOURDAIN. St. Francis honours me too much. I shall try to deserve the favour of that saint. But wherefore is my daughter denied the holy veil?

YOUNG LAROON. Your daughter, I am concerned to say it, is now with child by a young gentleman, one Mr. Laroon.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh, Heavens!

OLD LAROON. What's that you say, sir, because I thought I heard somewhat of a damned lie come out of your mouth.

YOUNG LAROON. Sir, it is St. Francis speaks within me, and he cannot be mistaken.

OLD LAROON. I can tell you, sir, if that young gentleman had heard you, he would certainly have thrashed St. Francis out of you.

YOUNG LAROON. Sir, you have nothing to do now, but to prepare the match with the utmost expedition.

OLD LAROON. This St. Francis must lie, or the boy would not be so eager upon the affair: no one is ever eager to sign articles when they have entered the town.—Well, Master Jourdain, if the young dog has tripped up your daughter's heels in an unlawful way, as St. Francis says, why he shall make her amends and—and do it in a lawful one. So I'll go see for my son, while you go and comfort the poor chicken that is pining for fear of a nunnery—

Ods-heart, it would be very hard indeed, when a girl has once had her belly full, that she must fast all her life afterwards.

YOUNG LAROON. I have delivered my commission, and shall now return to my convent——Farewell, and return thanks to St. Francis.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! St. Francis! St. Francis! What a merciful saint art thou!

[*Here begins the Second Act, as it is now played.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Apartment.*

FATHER MARTIN, ISABEL.

FATHER MARTIN. Indeed, child, there are pleasures in a retired life, which you are entirely ignorant of. Nay, there are indulgences granted to people in that state which would be sinful out of it. "And, perhaps, the same liberties are permitted them with one person, which are denied them with another." Come, put on a cheerful countenance, you don't know what you are designed for.

ISABEL. No, but I know what I am not designed for.

FATHER MARTIN. Let me feel your pulse.

ISABEL. You are a physician as well as a priest, I suppose.

FATHER MARTIN. Have you never any odd dreams?

ISABEL. No.

FATHER MARTIN. Do you never find any strange emotions?

ISABEL. No. None but what I believe are very natural.

FATHER MARTIN. Strange that——Did you never see me in your sleep?

ISABEL. I never dream of a priest, I assure you.

FATHER MARTIN. Nay, nay; be candid, confess; perhaps there may be nothing so sinful in it. We cannot help what we are designed for. "We are only passive, and the sin

lies not at our doors. While you are only passive, I'll answer for your sins."

ISABEL. What do you mean?

FATHER MARTIN. That you must not yet know——Great things are designed for you, very great things are designed for you.

ISABEL. (Hum! I begin to guess what is designed for me.) [*Aside.*

"FATHER MARTIN. Those eyes have a fire in them that scarce seems mortal.—Come hither——give me a kiss——ha! there is a sweetness in that breath like what I have read of Ambrosia. That bosom heaves like those of priestesses of old, when big with inspiration.

ISABEL. (Hoity-toity——Are you thereabouts, good father?") [*Aside.*

FATHER MARTIN. Let me embrace thee, my dear daughter, let me give thee joy of such promotion, such happiness as will attend you.

ISABEL. I'll try this reverend gentleman his own way. [*Aside.*

FATHER MARTIN. You must resign yourself up to my will, you must be passive in all things.

ISABEL. Oh! let me thus beg pardon on my knees, for an offence which modesty occasioned.

FATHER MARTIN. Ha! speak.

ISABEL. Oh! I see it is in vain to hide my secrets from you. What need have I to confess what you already know?

FATHER MARTIN. Confession was intended for the sake of the penitent, not the confessor: for to the Church all things are revealed.

ISABEL. Oh! then I had a dream——I dreamt——I dreamt——oh! I can never tell you what I dreamt.

"FATHER MARTIN. Horrible!

"ISABEL. I dreamt——I dreamt——I dreamt"——

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! the strength of sin!

ISABEL. I dreamt I was brought to bed of the pope.

FATHER MARTIN. The very happiness I meant; let me embrace you, let me kiss you, my dear daughter: henceforth

you may defy Purgatory——the mother of a pope was never there.

ISABEL. But how can that be, when I am to be a nun, father?

FATHER MARTIN. Leave the means to me. Learn only to be passive, the Church will work the rest. A pope is always the son of a nun. Go you to your chamber, wash yourself, then pray devoutly, shut every ray of light out, leave open the door, and expect the consequences.

ISABEL. Father, I shall be obedient—(Oh! the villain!) [*Aside.*

FATHER MARTIN. Be passive and be happy.

SCENE V.

OLD JOURDAIN, FATHER MARTIN, ISABEL.

FATHER MARTIN. Why this unseasonable interruption, while your daughter is at confession?

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh, father, I have brought you news will make you happy, will rejoice your poor heart. My daughter is redeemed.

FATHER MARTIN. Out of Purgatory——vain man! dost thou think to inform the Church?

OLD JOURDAIN. I suppose St. Francis has been beforehand with me. Indeed I should have imagined that before; for we seldom hear any thing from the saints, but through the mouth of a priest.

FATHER MARTIN. What does he mean? [*Aside.*

OLD JOURDAIN. Well, daughter, the thoughts of a nunnery now give you no uneasiness.

FATHER MARTIN. No, no she is perfectly reconciled to it, and I am confident, would not quit the nunnery for the bed of a prince.

OLD JOURDAIN. Ha! would not quit the nunnery, Heaven forbid.

FATHER MARTIN. How! you are not mad!

OLD JOURDAIN. Unless with joy. I thought you had known that I have received an order from St. Francis to marry my daughter immediately.

FATHER MARTIN. "Oh! folly!" to marry her immediately; why, ay, to marry her to the Church, St. Francis means. You see into what errors the laity run, when they go without the leading-strings of the Church, "and would interpret for themselves what they know nothing of."

ISABEL. I'll take this opportunity to steal off, and communicate a design of mine to young Laroon, which may draw this priest into a snare he little dreams of.

OLD JOURDAIN. But I cannot see how that should be St. Francis's meaning; for though my daughter may be married to the Church in a figurative sense, sure she cannot be with child by the Church in a literal one.

FATHER MARTIN. I see the business now, unhappy man! I was in hopes to have prevented this—*Exorcizo te. Exorciso te,* Satan. *Ton dapomeibomenos prosephe podas okus Achilleus.*

OLD JOURDAIN. Bless us, what mean you?

FATHER MARTIN. You are possessed; the Devil has taken possession of you; he is now within you, I saw him just now look out of your eyes.

OLD JOURDAIN. O miserable wretch that I am!

SCENE VI.

OLD LAROON, YOUNG LAROON, OLD JOURDAIN, FATHER MARTIN.

OLD LAROON. Mr. Jourdain, your servant. Where is my daughter-in-law? I'll warrant she will easily forgive one day's forwarding the match. Odso, it's an error of the right side.

OLD JOURDAIN. Talk not to me of my daughter, I am possessed, I am possessed.

OLD LAROON. Possessed—what the devil are you possessed with?

OLD JOURDAIN. I am possessed with the Devil.

OLD LAROON. You are possessed with a priest, and that's worse. Come, let's have the wedding, and, at night, we'll drive the Devil out of you with a fiddle. The Devil is a great lover of music. I have known half a dozen devils dance out of a man's mouth at the tuning a violin, then present the company with a hornpipe, and so dance a jig through the keyhole.

FATHER MARTIN. Thou art the Devil's son; for he is the father of liars.

OLD LAROON. Thou art the Devil's footman, and wearest his proper livery.

OLD JOURDAIN. Fie upon you, Mr. Laroon; fie upon you.

FATHER MARTIN. Mr. Laroon! O surprising effect of possession——Here is nobody.

OLD JOURDAIN. Can I not believe my eyes!

FATHER MARTIN. Can you not! no—you are to believe mine. The eyes of the laity may err, the eyes of a priest cannot.

OLD JOURDAIN. And do not I see Mr. Laroon and his son!

FATHER MARTIN. You see neither. It is the spirit within you that represents to your eyes and ears what objects it pleases.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! miserable wretch.

OLD LAROON. Agad I'll try whether I am nobody or no, and whether I cannot make this priest sensible that I am somebody.

YOUNG LAROON. For Heaven's sake, sir, consider the consequence.

OLD LAROON. Consequence! do you think I'll suffer a rascal to prove me nothing at all to my face?

OLD JOURDAIN. And is it possible all this is a vision?

FATHER MARTIN. Retire to rest—while I, by the force and battery of prayer, expel this dreadful guest.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! what a miserable wretch am I!

SCENE VII.

OLD LAROON, YOUNG LAROON, FATHER MARTIN.

OLD LAROON. Harkye, sir, will you please to tell me what this great impudence of yours means, and what you would intend by annihilating me?

FATHER MARTIN. It were happy for such sinners that they could be annihilated; "It were worth to you two hundred thousand masses, take my word for it.

"OLD LAROON. It were happy for such rascals as you, sirrah, that all honesty was annihilated.

"YOUNG LAROON. But pray, father, what reasons have you for preventing my match with Isabel?

"FATHER MARTIN. Reasons, young gentleman, that are not proper for your ears. Isabel is intended for a better bridegroom than you.

"OLD LAROON. How, sirrah! how! do you disparage my son; do you run down my boy?" Harkye, either make up affairs between them immediately, exert thyself in thy proper office, and hold the door, or I'll blow up thy convent; I'll burn your garrison, and disband such a set of black locusts as shall rob and pillage all Toulon.

FATHER MARTIN. I contemn thy threats. The saints defend their ministers.

OLD LAROON. The saints defend their ministers! the laws defend them: St. Wheel, and St. Prison, and St. Gibbet, and St. Faggot; these are the saints that defend you. If you had no defence but from the saints in the other world, you would few of you stay long in this. If you had no other arms than your beads, you would have shortly no other food.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh slanderous! Oh impious! some judgment cannot be far off.

OLD LAROON. When a priest is so near—sirrah!

SCENE VIII.

To them, ISABEL.

FATHER MARTIN. Daughter, fly from this wicked place; the breath of sin has infected it, "and two gallons of holy water will scarce purify the air."

ISABEL. Oh! Heavens! what's the matter, father?

OLD LAROON. Why, the matter is, this gentleman in black here, for reasons best known to himself, and another gentleman in black, has thought fit to forbid your marriage.

ISABEL. What the saints please.

OLD LAROON. Hoity-toity, what, has he filled your head with the saints too?

ISABEL. Oh, sir! I have had such dreams.

OLD LAROON. Dreams! Ha, ha, ha! the devil's in it, if a girl just going to be married should not have dreams. But they were dreams the saints had nothing to do with, I warrant you.

"ISABEL. Such visions of saints appearing to me, and advising me to a nunnery.

"OLD LAROON. Impossible! impossible! for I have had visions too: I have been ordered by half a dozen saints to see you married with the utmost expedition; and a very honest saint, whose name I forgot, came to me about an hour ago, and swore heartily if you were not married within this week, he'd lead you to Purgatory in a fortnight.

"FATHER MARTIN. Oh! grievous!

"ISABEL. Can there be such contradictions?

"OLD LAROON. Pshaw! pshaw! Yours was a dream, and so to be understood backwards; mine, a true vision, therefore to be believed. Why, child, I have been a famous seer of visions in my time. Would you believe it? While I was in the army, there never was a battle but I saw it some time beforehand. I have had an intimate familiarity

with the saints, I know them all; there is not one of them could be capable of saying such a thing."

ISABEL. Oh! sir, I saw and heard, and must believe; for none but the Church can contradict our senses.

OLD LAROON. So, sir! the distemper's hereditary, I find: the daughter is as full of the Church as the father. Come away, son, come away: I would not have thee marry into such a family; I should be grandfather to a race of greasy priests. 'Sdeath! this girl will be brought to bed of a pope one day or other.

ISABEL. 'Tis out, 'tis out.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh, prodigious! that such a saint should prophesy truth through those lips, where the Devil has been thundering so many lies.

OLD LAROON. What truth, sir? what truth?

ISABEL. Oh! sir, the blessing you mentioned has been promised me! I am to give a pope to the world.

OLD LAROON. Are you so, madam? He shall have no blood of mine in him. I'm resolved I'll never ask blessings of a grandson. Come away, Jack, come away, I say; let us leave the devil's son and the pope's mother together.

YOUNG LAROON. Remember, my Isabel, I only live in the hopes of seeing you mine.

SCENE IX.

FATHER MARTIN, ISABEL.

FATHER MARTIN. It were better that thou shouldst howl in Purgatory ten thousand years, than ever see that day. Oh! that we had but an inquisition in France. Burning four or five hundred such fellows in a morning would be the best way of deterring others. Religion loves to warm itself at the fire of a heretic.

ISABEL. Fire is as necessary to keep our minds warm as our bodies, father: "and burning a heretic is really a

very great service done to himself; a faggot is a purge for a sick soul, and a heretic is obliged to the priest who applies it."

FATHER MARTIN. There spoke the spirit of zeal: let me embrace thee, my little saint; for such thou wilt be; let me kiss thee with the pure affection of a confessor——Ha! there is something divine in these lips, let me taste them again; are you sure you have drank no holy-water this morning?

ISABEL. None, upon my word.

FATHER MARTIN. Let me smell a third time. There. *Numero Dues impare gaudet.* Depend on it, child, very great happiness will attend you. But be sure to observe my directions in every thing.

ISABEL. I shall, father. I did as you commanded me this morning.

FATHER MARTIN. Well, and did you perceive any great alterations in yourself? any extraordinary emotion?

ISABEL. I cannot say I did.

FATHER MARTIN. Hum! Spirits have their own times of operations; which must be diligently watched for. "Perhaps your good genius was at that time otherwise employed. Repeat the ceremony often, and my life on the success." Let me see, about an hour hence will be a very good season. Be ready to receive him, and, I firmly believe, the spirit will come to you.

ISABEL. Oh lud! father, I shall be frighted out of my wits at the sight of a spirit.

FATHER MARTIN. You will see nothing frightful, take my word for it.

ISABEL. I hope he won't appear in any horrible shape.

FATHER MARTIN. Hum!——That is to be averted by *Ave Maries.* As this is a friendly spirit, I daresay you may prevail on him to take what shape you please. Perhaps your father; or if you cannot prevail for a layman, I dare swear you may at least pray him into the shape of your confessor: and though I must suffer pain on that account, I am ready to undergo it for your service.

ISABEL. I am infinitely obliged to my dear father; I'll prepare myself for this vast happiness, and nothing shall be wanting on my part, I assure you.

FATHER MARTIN. And if any thing be wanting on mine, may I never say mass again, or never be paid for masses I have not said. "Either this girl has extraordinary simplicity, or, what is more likely, extraordinary cunning; she does not seem averse to my kisses. Why should I not imagine she sees and approves my design? Well, I'll say this for the sex; let a man but invent any excuse for the sin, and they are all all ready to undertake it." How happy is a priest,

> Who can the blushing maid's resistance smother,
> With sin in one hand, pardon in the other.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—ISABEL'S *Apartment.*

YOUNG LAROON, ISABEL.

YOUNG LAROON. Perdition seize the villain; may all the torments of twenty inquisitions rack his soul!

ISABEL. Act your part well, and we shall not want his own weapons against him.

YOUNG LAROON. Sure it is impossible he can intend it—

ISABEL. Shall I make the experiment?

YOUNG LAROON. I shall never be able to forbear murdering him.

ISABEL. You shall promise not to commit any violence; you know too well what will be the consequence of that. "Let us sufficiently convict him, and leave his punishment to the law.

"YOUNG LAROON. And I know too well what will be the consequence of that. There seems to be a combination between priests and lawyers; the lawyers are to save the priests from punishment for their rogueries in this world, and the priests the lawyers in the next."

ISABEL. However, the same law that screens him for having injured you, will punish you for having done justice to him. [*Knocking at the door.*

ISABEL. Oh! Heavens! the priest is at the door. What shall we do?

YOUNG LAROON. Damn him: I'll stay here and confront him.

ISABEL. Oh! no, by no means; for once, I'll attack him in his own way; so the moment he opens the door, do you run out, and leave the rest to me.

[*She throws herself into a chair, and shrieks.*
YOUNG LAROON *overturns* FATHER MARTIN.

SCENE II.

FATHER MARTIN, ISABEL.

FATHER MARTIN. I am slain, I am overlaid, I am murdered. Oh! daughter, daughter, is this your patient expectation of the spirit?

ISABEL. It has been here, it has been here.

FATHER MARTIN. What has been here?

ISABEL. Oh! the spirit, the spirit. It has been here this half hour, and just as you came in, it vanished away in a clap of thunder, and I thought would have taken the room with it.

FATHER MARTIN. I thought it would have taken me with it, I am sure. Spirit, indeed! there are abundance of such spirits as these in Toulon. And pray, how have the spirit and you employed your time this half hour?

ISABEL. Oh, don't ask me, it is impossible to tell you.

FATHER MARTIN. Ay, 'tis needless too: for I can give a shrewd guess. I suppose you like his company?

ISABEL. Oh! so well, that I could wish he would visit me ten times every day.

"FATHER MARTIN. Oh, oh! and in the same shape too?

"ISABEL. Oh! I should like him in any shape; and I dare swear he'll come in any shape too; for he is the purest, sweetest, most complaisant spirit! I could have almost sworn it had been Mr. Laroon himself.

"FATHER MARTIN. Was there ever such a——"

ISABEL. Nay, when it came in first, it behaved just like Mr. Laroon, and called itself by his name; but when it found I did not answer a word, it took me by the hand, and cried, 'Is it possible you can be angry with your Laroon!' I answered not a word; then it kissed me a hundred times; I said nothing still; it caught me in its arms, and embraced me passionately: I still behaved as you commanded me, very passive.

"FATHER MARTIN. Oh! the devil, the devil! Was ever man so caught? And did you never apprehend it to be Mr. Laroon himself?

"ISABEL. Heaven forbid I should have suffered Mr. Laroon in these familiarities, which you ordered me to allow the spirit."

FATHER MARTIN. I am caught, indeed. Damned, driveling idiot! [*Aside.*

ISABEL. But, dear father, tell me, shall I not see it again quickly? for I long to see it again.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! yes, yes——

ISABEL. I long to see it in the dark, methinks; for, you know, father, one sees spirits best in the dark.

FATHER MARTIN. Ay, ay, you'll see it in the dark, I warrant you; but be sure and behave as you did before.

ISABEL. And will he always behave as he did before, father?

FATHER MARTIN. Hum! be in your chamber this evening at eight; take care there be no light in the room, and perhaps the spirit may pay you a second visit.

ISABEL. I'll be sure to be punctual.

FATHER MARTIN. And passive?

ISABEL. I'll obey you in every thing.

FATHER MARTIN. Senseless oaf! But though I have lost the first fruits by her extreme folly, yet am I highly delighted with it: and if I do not make a notable use of it, I am no priest.

SCENE III.

OLD JOURDAIN. [*Solus.*] Oh! Purgatory! Purgatory! what would I not give to escape thy flames! methinks I feel them already. Hark! what noise is that?—Nothing—Ha! what's that I see? Some thing with two heads—What can all this portend?—"What a poor miserable wretch am I!"

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. Sir, a friar below desires to speak with you.

OLD JOURDAIN. Why will you suffer a man of holy order to wait a moment at my door? Bring him in. "Perhaps he is some messenger of comfort. But oh! I rather fear the reverse: for what comfort can a sinner like me expect?"

SCENE IV.

OLD LAROON *in a Friar's habit,* OLD JOURDAIN.

OLD LAROON. A plague attend this house, and all that are in it.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! oh!

OLD LAROON. Art thou that miserable, sad, poor son of a whore, Jourdain?

OLD JOURDAIN. Alas! alas!

OLD LAROON. If thou art he, I have a message to thee from St. Francis. The saint gives his humble service to

you, and bid me tell you you are one of the saddest dogs that ever lived for having disobeyed his orders, and attempted to put your daughter into a nunnery; for which he has given me positive orders to assure you, you shall lie in Purgatory five hundred thousand years.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh!

OLD LAROON. And I assure you it is a very warm sort of a place; for I called there as I came along to take lodgings for you.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! Heavens! is it possible that you can have seen the dreadful horrors of that place?

"OLD LAROON. Seen them! Ha, ha, ha! Why, I have been there half a dozen times in a day. Why, how far do you take it to be to Purgatory? Not above a mile and half at farthest, and every step of the way down hill." Seen them! Ay, ay, I have seen them! and a pretty sight they are too, a pretty tragical sort of a sight if it were not for the confounded heat of the air—then there is the prettiest concert of music.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! Heavens! music!

OLD LAROON. Ay, ay, groans, groans, a fine concert of groans; you would think yourself at an opera if it were not for the great heat of the air, as I said before. Some spirits are shut up in ovens, some are chained to spits, some are scattered in frying-pans—and I have taken up a place for you on a gridiron.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! I am scorched, I am scorched—For pity's sake, father, intercede with St. Francis for me; compassionate my case—

"OLD LAROON. There is but one way; let me carry him the news of your daughter's marriage, that may perhaps appease him. Between you and I, St. Francis is a liquorish old dog, and loves to set people to work to his heart.

"OLD JOURDAIN. She shall be married this instant; the saint must know it is none of my fault. Had I rightly understood his will, it had been long since performed——But well might I misinterpret him, when even the Church, when Father Martin failed."

OLD LAROON. I would be very glad to know where I should find that same Father Martin. I have a small commission to him relating to a Purgatory affair. St. Francis has sentenced him to lie in a frying-pan there just six hundred years, for his amour with your daughter.

OLD JOURDAIN. My daughter!

OLD LAROON. Are you ignorant of it then? Did you not know that he had debauched your daughter?

OLD JOURDAIN. Ignorant! Oh! Heavens! no wonder she is refused the veil.

OLD LAROON. I thought you had known it. I'll show you a sight worse than Purgatory itself: you shall behold this disgrace to the Church, a sight shall make you shudder.

OLD JOURDAIN. Is it possible a priest should be such a villain?

OLD LAROON. Nothing's impossible to the Church, you know.

"OLD JOURDAIN. And may I hope St. Francis will be appeased?

"OLD LAROON. Hum! There is a great favourite of that saint who lives in this town; his name is Monsieur Laroon. If you could get him to say half a dozen bead-rolls for you, they might be of great service.

"OLD JOURDAIN. How! Can the saint regard so loose a liver?

"OLD LAROON. Oh! St. Francis loves an honest merry fellow to his soul. And harkye, I don't think it impossible for Mr. Laroon to bring you acquainted with the saint; for to my knowledge they very often crack a bottle together.

"OLD JOURDAIN. Can I believe it?"

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. Father Martin is below.

OLD LAROON. Son, behave civilly to him, nor mention a word of what I have told you—that we may entrap him more securely.

SCENE V.

To them, FATHER MARTIN.

FATHER MARTIN. Peace be with my son. Ha! a friar here! I like not this; I will have no partners in my plunder. [*Aside.*] Save you, reverend father.

OLD LAROON. Tu quoque.

FATHER MARTIN. This fellow should be a Jesuit by his taciturnity. You see, father, the miserable state of our poor son.

OLD LAROON. I have advised him thereon.

FATHER MARTIN. Your advice is kind, though needless. He hath not wanted prayer, fasting, nor castigation, which are proper physic for him.

OLD LAROON. Or suppose, father, he was to go to a ball. What think you of a ball?

FATHER MARTIN. A ball!

OLD LAROON. Ay, or a wench now; suppose we were to procure him a wench.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! monstrous! Oh! impious!

OLD LAROON. I only give my opinion.

FATHER MARTIN. Thy opinion is damnable: and thou art some wolf in sheep's clothing. Thou art a scandal to thy order.

OLD LAROON. I wish thou art not more a scandal to thine, brother father, to abuse a poor old fellow in a fit of the spleen here, as thou dost, with a set of ridiculous notions of Purgatory, and the devil knows what, when both you and I know there is no such thing.

FATHER MARTIN. That I should not know thee before. Don't you know this reverend father, son? your worthy neighbour Laroon.

OLD LAROON. Then farewell, hypocrisy. I would not wear thy cloak another hour for any consideration.

OLD JOURDAIN. What do I see?

OLD LAROON. Why, you see a very honest neighbour of yours, that has tried to deliver you out of the claws of a roguish priest, whom you may see too; look in the glass, and you may see an old doting fool, who is afraid of his own shadow.

FATHER MARTIN. Be not concerned at this, son. Perhaps one hour's suffering from this fellow may strike off several years of Purgatory: I have known such instances.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! father! didst thou know what I have been guilty of believing against thee from the mouth of this wicked man?

OLD LAROON. Death and the devil, I'll stay no longer here: for, if I do, I shall cut this priest's throat, though the rack was before my face.

SCENE VI.

FATHER MARTIN, OLD JOURDAIN.

FATHER MARTIN. Son, take care of believing any thing against the Church: it is as sinful to believe any thing against the Church, as to disbelieve any thing for it. You are to believe what the Church tells you, and no more.

OLD JOURDAIN. I almost shudder when I think what I believed against you. I believed that you had seduced my daughter.

FATHER MARTIN. Oh! horrible! and did you believe it? think not you believed it. I order you to think you did not believe it, and it were now sinful to believe you did believe it.

OLD JOURDAIN. And can I think so?

FATHER MARTIN. Certainly. I know what you believe better than you yourself do. However, that your mind may be cleansed from the least pollution of thought—go, say over ten bead-rolls immediately; go, and peace attend you——

OLD JOURDAIN. I am exceedingly comforted within.

SCENE VII.

FATHER MARTIN. [*Solus.*] Go. While I retire and comfort your daughter. Was this a suspicion of Laroon's, or am I betrayed? I begin to fear. I'll act with caution: for I am not able yet to discover whether this girl be of prodigious simplicity or cunning. How vain is policy, when the little arts of a woman are superior to the wisdom of a conclave! A priest may cheat mankind, but a woman would cheat the devil.

"SCENE VIII.—*The Street.*

"OLD LAROON *and* YOUNG LAROON *meet.*

YOUNG LAROON. Well, sir, what success?

OLD LAROON. Success! you rascal! if ever you offer to put me into a priest's skin again, I'll beat you out of your own.

"YOUNG LAROON. What's the matter, sir?

"OLD LAROON. Matter, sir! Why, I have been laughed at, have been abused. 'Sdeath! sir! I am in such a passion, that I do not believe I shall come to myself again these twenty years. That rascal Martin discovered me in an instant, and turned me into a jest.

"YOUNG LAROON. Be comforted, sir, you may yet have the pleasure of turning him into one.

"OLD LAROON. Nothing less than turning him inside out. ——Nothing less than broiling his gizzard will satisfy me.

"YOUNG LAROON. Come with me, and I dare swear I'll give your revenge content. We have laid a snare for him, which I think it is impossible he should escape.

"OLD LAROON. A snare for a priest! a trap for the Devil! you will as soon catch the one as the other.

"YOUNG LAROON. I am sure our bait is good—A fine woman is as good a bait for a priest-trap, as toasted cheese is for a mouse-trap.

"OLD LAROON. Yes, but the rascal will nibble off twenty baits before you can take him.

"YOUNG LAROON. Leave that to us. I'll warrant our success.

"OLD LAROON. Wilt thou? then I shall have more pleasure in taking this one priest. than in all the other wild beasts I have ever taken."

SCENE IX.

OLD JOURDAIN, ISABEL.

ISABEL. If I don't convince you he's a villain, renounce me for your daughter. Do not shut your ears against truth, and you shall want no other evidence.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh, daughter, daughter, some evil spirit is busy within you. The same spirit that visited me this morning is now in you.

ISABEL. I wish the spirit that is in me would visit you, you would kick this rogue out of doors.

OLD JOURDAIN. The wicked reason of your anger is too plain. The priest won't let you have your fellow.

ISABEL. The priest would have me for himself.

OLD JOURDAIN. Oh! wicked assertion! Oh! base return for the care he has taken of your poor sinful father, for the love he has shown for your soul.

ISABEL. He has shown more love for my body, believe me, sir. Nay, go but with me, and you shall believe your own eyes and ears.

OLD JOURDAIN. Against the Church! Heaven forbid!

ISABEL. Will you not believe your own senses, sir?

OLD JOURDAIN. Not when the Church contradicts them. —Alas! how do we know what we believe without the Church? Why, I thought I saw Mr. Laroon and his son to-day, when I saw neither. Alack-a-day, child, the Church often contradicts our senses. But you owe these wicked thoughts to your education in England, that vile heretical

country, where every man believes what religion he pleases, and most believe none.

ISABEL. Well, sir, if you will not be convinced, you shall be the only person in Toulon that is not.

OLD JOURDAIN. I will go with thee, if it were only to see how far this wicked spirit will carry his imposition; for I am convinced the Devil will leave no stone unturned to work my destruction.

ISABEL. I hope you will find us too hard for him and his ambassador too.

SCENE X.—*Another Apartment.*

YOUNG LAROON, [*in woman's clothes.*] None ever waited with more impatience for her lover than I for mine. It is a delightful assignation, but I hope it is a prelude to one more agreeable. I shall have difficulty to refrain from beating the rascal before he has discovered himself—— [*Knocking at the door.*] Who's there? [*Softly.*

BEATRICE. Isabel, Isabel!

YOUNG LAROON. Come in. What a soft voice the rogue caterwauls in!

SCENE XI.

YOUNG LAROON, BEATRICE.

BEATRICE. What are you doing in the dark, my dear?

YOUNG LAROON. Heyday, who the devil is this? I seem to be in a way of an assignation in earnest.

BEATRICE. Isabel, where are you?

YOUNG LAROON. Here, child, give me your hand. Dear Mademoiselle Beatrice, is it you?

BEATRICE. Oh Heavens! am I in a man's arms?

YOUNG LAROON. Hush! hush!—Don't you know my voice?—I am Laroon.

BEATRICE. Mr. Laroon! What business can you have here?

YOUNG LAROON. Ask me no questions, get but into a corner of the room and be silent, and you will perhaps see a very diverting scene. Nay, do not be afraid, for I assure you it will be a very innocent one; make haste, dear madam, you will do a very laudable action, by being an additional evidence to the discovery of a notorious villain.

BEATRICE. I cannot guess your meaning, but would willingly assist on such an occasion.

YOUNG LAROON. Now for my desiring lover. Ha! I think I hear him.

SCENE XII.

YOUNG LAROON, FATHER MARTIN.

FATHER MARTIN. Isabel, Isabel, where are you?

YOUNG LAROON. Here.

FATHER MARTIN. Come to my arms, my angel.

YOUNG LAROON. I hope you are in no frightful shape.

FATHER MARTIN. I am in the shape of that very good man thy confessor, honest Father Martin. Let me embrace thee, my love, my charmer.

YOUNG LAROON. Bless me, what do you mean?

FATHER MARTIN. The words even of a spirit cannot tell you what I mean. Lead me to thy bed, there shalt thou know my meaning. There will we repeat those pleasures which this day I gave thee in another shape—Tread softly, my dearest, sweetest! This night shall make thee mother to a pope. [Laroon *leads him out.*

SCENE XIII.—*Another Apartment.*

OLD LAROON, OLD JOURDAIN, ISABEL, A PRIEST, YOUNG LAROON, FATHER MARTIN, *and* BEATRICE.

FATHER MARTIN. Whither will you pull me?

YOUNG LAROON. Villain, I'll show thee whither.

FATHER MARTIN. Ha!

YOUNG LAROON. Down on thy knees, confess thyself the worst of villains, or I'll drive this dagger to thy heart.

PRIEST. He needs not confess; our ears are sufficient witnesses against him.

OLD LAROON. Huzza! huzza! the priest is caught, the priest is caught.

OLD JOURDAIN. I am thunderstruck with amazement.

OLD LAROON. How dost thou attempt to debauch my son, you black rascal? I have a great mind to make an example of you for attempting to dishonour my family.

PRIEST. You shall be made a severe example of, for having dishonoured your order.

FATHER MARTIN. I shall find another time to answer you.

OLD LAROON. Hold, sir, hold. I have too much charity not to cleanse you, as much as possible, from your pollution. So, who's there? [*Enter* Servants.] Here, take this worthy gentleman, and wash him a little in a horse-pond, then toss him dry in a blanket.

1 SERVANT. We will wash him with a vengeance.

ALL. Ay, ay, we'll wash him.

FATHER MARTIN. You may repent this, Mr. Laroon.

SCENE *the last.*

OLD LAROON, YOUNG LAROON, OLD JOURDAIN, PRIEST, ISABEL, *and* BEATRICE.

PRIEST. Though he deserves the worst, yet consider his order, Mr. Laroon.

OLD LAROON. Sir, he shall undergo the punishment, though I suffer the like afterwards. Well, Master Jourdain, I hope you are now convinced that you may marry your daughter without going to Purgatory for it.

OLD JOURDAIN. I hope you will pardon what is past, my good neighbour; and you, young gentleman, will, I hope,

do the same. If my girl can make you any amends, I give you her for ever.

YOUNG LAROON. Amends! Oh! she would make me large amends for twenty thousand times my sufferings.

ISABEL. Tell me so hereafter, my dear lover. "A woman may make a man amends for his sufferings before marriage, but can she make him amends for what he suffers after it?

"YOUNG LAROON. Oh! think not that can ever be my fate with you.

"OLD LAROON. Pox o' your raptures! If you don't make her suffer before to-morrow morning, thou art no son of mine; and if she does not make you suffer within this twelvemonth, blood, she is no woman——Come, honest neighbour, I hope thou hast discovered thy own folly and the priest's roguery together, and thou wilt return and be one of us again.

"OLD JOURDAIN. Mr. Laroon, if I have erred on one side, you have erred as widely on the other. Let me tell you, a reflection on the sins of your youth would not be unwholesome.

"OLD LAROON. 'Sblood, sir, but it would! Reflection is the most unwholesome thing in the world. Besides, sir, I have no sins to reflect on but those of an honest fellow. If I have loved a whore at five-and-twenty, and a bottle at forty, why I have done as much good as I could in my generation; and that, I hope, will make amends."

ISABEL. Well, my dear Beatrice, and are you positively bent on a nunnery still?

BEATRICE. Hum! I suppose you will laugh at me if I should change my resolution; but I have seen so much of a priest to-day, that I really believe I shall spend my life in the company of a layman.

OLD LAROON. Why, that is bravely said, madam. 'Sbud! I like you, and if I had not resolved for the sake of this rascal here never to marry again, 'Sbud! I might take you into my arms; and I can tell you, they are as warm as any young fellow's in Europe.—Come, Master Jourdain, this

night you and I will crack a bottle together, and to-morrow morning we will employ this honest gentleman here to make our son and daughter together, and then I don't care if I never see a priest again as long as I live.

ISABEL. [*To* Young Laroon.] Well, sir, you see we have got the better of all difficulties at last. The fears of a lover are very unreasonable, when he is once assured of the sincerity of his mistress;

> For when a woman sets herself about it,
> Nor priest nor devil can make her go without it.

END OF VOL. II

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